



CCI SEEKS A CITY COUNCIL FOR ATLANTA

The Center for Civic Innovation works to inform, engage, connect, and empower people to shape the future of Atlanta. We believe local government works for the people and that their voices should be vital in the vision and development of our city. Government should be responsive but not reactionary; it should be open and easy to access; and above all, it should be people-driven.

Many Atlanta communities are changing rapidly, causing tension in many neighborhoods and serious worries that Atlanta will no longer be “Atlanta.” We are a city with an interesting history from our role in the Civil War, a home of the Civil Rights movement, and the birthplace of American icons like Coca-Cola or OutKast - yet from big fires to big developments we are known as a city of change.

The people of Atlanta are seeking a new city council to lead the city as it navigates these changes and grows over the next 4+ years. Your job as a city council member will be to listen to community voices, then design and deliver a city that suits their needs!

MEET THE CANDIDATES

DISTRICT 4:

[Jason Dozier](#)

Cleta Winslow - did not complete

DISTRICT 9:

Kwame Abernathy - did not complete

[Dustin Hillis](#)

DISTRICT 11:

Harold Hardnett - did not complete

[Marcia Overstreet](#)

DISTRICT 4

Jason Dozier

QUALIFIED TO GOVERN

Q: What do you think is the most important role of the the city council?

A: City Council's most important role is to steward Atlanta's government in an efficient, ethical, and equitable manner. This is a broad mandate that includes a spectrum of important tasks, from routine budgetary decisions to historic new projects. While all legislative bodies function to make laws, Council is charged with shepherding this city through the challenges of the 21st Century. While all eyes might be on the mayor, the work done by City Council can affect communities for generations.

Q: Please describe, in sufficient detail, one professional accomplishment or contribution of which you are most proud. These examples should illustrate skills and capabilities you think apply to governing the City of Atlanta. These accomplishments may have occurred at any time in your personal, professional, or public life.

A: I served in Afghanistan from October 2010 to October 2011. During that period, I was charged with coordinating and synchronizing special operations missions in our unit's operating environment in eastern Afghanistan. Over the course of a year, I used relationships that I developed and sustained between the Special Forces community, conventional military forces, and our Afghan partners to create a collaborative environment, setting the conditions to bring different organizations with different priorities together for a common goal. I firmly believe in the power of collaboration and communication. My work in Afghanistan helped instill a personal leadership style which works to generate buy-in from stakeholders and treats all parties as equals.

Q: Please list or describe no more than 3 current and past activities you participated in as a private citizen (not an elected official) in which you have acquired skills and perspectives that will make you a stronger mayor. Include your role in the activity and the year(s) in which you were involved.

A: My commitment to community-based priorities came from my experiences in the military. From 2007 through 2009, I was forward-deployed as a reconnaissance officer in Baghdad. I helped shape the unit's diplomatic commitment to Iraqi citizens. I worked with

elected officials, religious leaders, and administrative personnel to aggressively stamp out corruption, improve security, and build a better quality of life for the city's citizens. I recognized that people came first, despite our different backgrounds and nationalities. I even taught myself conversational Arabic because it helped me build better rapport with the citizens I was seeking to protect. This experience greatly impacted my worldview on community engagement. Those of us in positions of power must do all we can to make governance a friendlier and more accessible process.

CULTURE FIT

Q: What does it mean to be an Atlantian/ATLien in 140 characters or less?

A: Exceeding expectations and advancing beyond stereotypes while striving to remain committed to our rich, diverse history and cultural legacy.

Q: What is a new slogan for our city that could unite Atlantians and highlight who we are as a people?

A: Many neighborhoods, one vision.

DEMONSTRATES PEOPLE-CENTERED APPROACHES

Q: The City of Atlanta currently owns several hundred surplus properties that could be redeveloped. In deciding what to do with these properties, what is the role of community input and when should it take place?

A: Atlanta should focus on preserving access to quality affordable housing. We should update our land use policies to allow for a diversity of uses which would meet the needs of families looking for housing options beyond large-scale, multi-family and low-density, single-family units. These ideas must still conform to the standards of the communities in which they impact. We can achieve these goals in a comprehensive way that still conforms to the standards set forth by each community.

My vision for Atlanta recognizes the importance of our communities in our city's decision-making process. Atlanta's leaders must aggressively champion our neighborhoods, our historic institutions, and our working families. We must preserve Atlanta's position as a center of culture, heritage, and history, and that preservation can only happen when our city's residents and institutions can afford to remain in the city. An aggressive community-based agenda would work to preserve this legacy.

Q: The NPU system was envisioned as a place for communities to engage with development in their neighborhoods. How would you, through your role in City Council, support the existing NPU system or seek to change it?

A: NPUs enable citizens to comment on city plans and proposals while assisting the city in developing priorities that best meet the needs of their communities. However, the city curtails that process far too often, especially when the NPU votes for or against something being advocated for by either the mayor or other interested parties. I support the NPU system, but I recognize that it needs to be reformed to be an effective method for community engagement.

The city needs to clearly define the NPU's role in the city's decision-making process. Many pieces of legislation seek NPU input without sufficient notice and without clear explanation of the legislation's impact. We could solve many of these problems by investing in additional staff and resources and standardizing the NPU process across the city. City Council should adhere to the decisions made at the local level. It's difficult to engage citizens when City Hall ignores their voices.

PROACTIVE & RELENTLESS RELATIONSHIP-BUILDER

Q: Give an example of a time when you had to collaborate with many people and/or organizations, especially those who may not hold the same views as you do.

A: While deployed to Iraq, our unit trained local forces to assume leadership of security operations across the country. Three different organizations oversaw Iraq's security infrastructure: the Iraqi Army, the National Police (which worked in a law enforcement role that prioritized anti-corruption campaign), and local police agencies. Each organization had different agendas and were affected by varying degrees of corruption. Rather than collaborate towards common goals, many of these individuals sought to undermine each other, which sometimes would lead to threats of violence.

Our team convinced these groups to work together and focus on common goals. We worked together with individual leaders and generated buy-in from the various chains-of-command. We won over the organizations by winning over the leaders. We convinced people to put common goals ahead of egos, an approach that I think is vital to effective governance in any city.

Q: Think of one major Atlanta issue impacting the district you seek to serve and that needs to be tackled with a collaborative approach, how would you build relationships across the city and region with other governments, private enterprises, or organizations to effect change in our city?

A: Constituent representation is a fundamental responsibility, but so is collaboration. District 4 is in a unique position because it serves as a microcosm of the massive changes happening across the City of Atlanta. District 4's needs and challenges are Atlanta's needs and challenges, and I believe there is a terrific opportunity to collaborate with colleagues to implement comprehensive citywide strategies that would also positively benefit District

4. I already have an excellent relationship with many of our current and prospective City Councilmembers, and I believe that those positive relationships will allow for effective collaboration if elected.

STRONG INTEREST IN TRANSPARENCY

Q: What level of openness and transparency should the citizens of Atlanta expect from city government under your leadership?

A: Government transparency has been a cornerstone of my campaign, and it is a necessary component of an equitable and just society. For too long, planning in Atlanta has been influenced by backroom deals where those with the right access are prioritized over the people that our officials have sworn to serve. I served as an Army officer across two overseas tours to Iraq and Afghanistan, so I have seen firsthand how money can corrupt local governments, and when left unchecked, how that corruption can bring undue suffering to the people that need help the most.

If elected, I will fight for justice, equity, and transparency in our government. I believe that no issue is too large or too small for public scrutiny. Whether it's sanctioning a street closing for a film shoot or voting to spend hundreds of millions of dollars in taxpayer funds to build a sports arena, the public has a right to know how our elected officials are conducting themselves at City Hall.

Q: Please describe any policies, programs, or ideas you are considering to increase the transparency of city government.

A: --Champion an open, honest, and responsive government that values citizen input and community engagement.
--Fight to maintain an independent ethics board which defends values like integrity and accountability through an active and robust oversight process.
--Post checkbook-level spending for my District office online so that constituents can see how their needs have been prioritized.
--Commit to routine, predictable, and well-advertised town hall meetings with neighborhoods across District 4.
--Support implementing new regulations to stop ethics abuses by commissioning an independent, external body to audit procurement procedures.
--Update public comment rules and build a framework which allows for the submission of questions and remarks outside of the public commentary period.
--Continue to invest in our city employees by working to provide additional training, resources, and professional development opportunities tied to a uniform code of ethics.

DISTRICT 9

Dustin Hillis

QUALIFIED TO GOVERN

Q: What do you think is the most important role of the the city council?

A: I think the most important role of the Atlanta City Council is to discuss, implement, and revise legislation that will move our city forward for ALL Atlantans. One of the most important tasks for the new Council will be addressing the inequity that continues to grow in our tale of two cities.

Q: Please describe, in sufficient detail, one professional accomplishment or contribution of which you are most proud. These examples should illustrate skills and capabilities you think apply to governing the City of Atlanta. These accomplishments may have occurred at any time in your personal, professional, or public life.

A: The accomplishment/contribution I am most proud of is serving as Special Projects Director to current District 9 Councilmember Felicia Moore. Focusing on addressing blight and improving public safety in Northwest Atlanta, my work included filing and/or following over 1000 code enforcement complaints, with around 80% of those being resolved - including over 100 demolitions of blighted structures. Additionally, I worked with the Atlanta Police Department and the Atlanta Police Foundation to manage the deployment of 24 crime cameras and license plate readers in our higher crime areas and corridors.

Q: Please list or describe no more than 3 current and past activities you participated in as a private citizen (not an elected official) in which you have acquired skills and perspectives that will make you a stronger mayor. Include your role in the activity and the year(s) in which you were involved.

A: 1) I have served on the board of my neighborhood association (Riverside Neighborhood Association) since 2012. I was first appointed as the Chair of Security & Code Enforcement in 2012, still serving in that position today. Additionally, I was elected as Vice President (2014-2015) and President (2016) and now serve as the Immediate Past President. 2) I guided the Riverside Proactive rezoning in 2016, which successfully sought to rezone parcels along our main corridors to incentivize new, more dense development with neighborhood-driven conditions. 3) I have been a member of my NPU-D since 2013 and regularly attended all other NPUs within District 9.

CULTURE FIT

Q: What does it mean to be an Atlantan/ATLien in 140 characters or less?

A: Being someone whose heart is in our city who loves to enjoy our city's many benefits, while knowing we have much more work to do to improve.

Q: What is a new slogan for our city that could unite Atlantans and highlight who we are as a people?

A: Atlanta: Again We Rise!

DEMONSTRATES PEOPLE-CENTERED APPROACHES

Q: The City of Atlanta currently owns several hundred surplus properties that could be redeveloped. In deciding what to do with these properties, what is the role of community input and when should it take place?

A: The city should engage our neighborhoods and NPUs regarding the properties in question. This should begin early in the process and be a continual conversation as the process moves toward redevelopment. I think community feedback can guide the process of returning these properties to meaningful uses that will serve both the neighborhoods and the city as a whole.

Q: The NPU system was envisioned as a place for communities to engage with development in their neighborhoods. How would you, through your role in City Council, support the existing NPU system or seek to change it?

A: The NPU system is undoubtedly an important part of our development and civic process here in Atlanta. I already attend most NPU meetings across District 9 (we have 2 whole NPUs and pieces of 5 others). To that point, I would support reapportionment of NPUs to make them more equal in population (for example, NPU populations range from around 1800 to 47,000) and also in regards to how many NPU's there are per council district.

PROACTIVE & RELENTLESS RELATIONSHIP-BUILDER

Q: Give an example of a time when you had to collaborate with many people and/or organizations, especially those who may not hold the same views as you do.

A: One of the greatest collaboration efforts and successes I was lucky to be a part of was Emory's Serious Communicable Disease Unit during the Ebola outbreak when we treated multiple missionaries and a nurse who had become infected while treating patients themselves. This required a huge group effort by executives, doctors, nurses, government

agencies, and many others. The new protocols developed relied significantly on nursing input and feedback due to us being the ones who were most at risk. In the end, it was a glowing success I was proud to be a part of.

Q: Think of one major Atlanta issue impacting the district you seek to serve and that needs to be tackled with a collaborative approach, how would you build relationships across the city and region with other governments, private enterprises, or organizations to effect change in our city?

A: One of the major issues I see is the gross lack of collaboration on improving our education system for our children. While a few sitting councilmembers and school board members have formed an informal group to discuss the issues, the overall relationship has unfortunately been adversarial. I would look to bring together an official commission of councilmembers, school board members, other state and local representatives, local corporations and small businesses, and representatives from our higher education institutions to really drill down on getting our local public education system on the right track. We need to make education and APS something that serves children first and serves as an attraction to our city, not a diversion.

STRONG INTEREST IN TRANSPARENCY

Q: What level of openness and transparency should the citizens of Atlanta expect from city government under your leadership?

A: We have MUCH improvement to be made when it comes to the transparency of our municipal government. It is my belief that the lack of implementation of best practices led to the current, still-unfolding bribery scandal at City Hall. I would look to bring Atlanta's failing "F" rating on transparency up to an "A+".

Q: Please describe any policies, programs, or ideas you are considering to increase the transparency of city government.

A: One thing I will champion on Council is implementing best practices in ethics and transparency. We should have a single, easily, navigable online portal for our city's finances and contracts. Our citizens, government watchdogs, and news agencies should be able to see this information without going through an open records process. The portal would show ALL city receipts and expenditures - down to the checkbook level and be easily searchable. It would also include all city contracts. Additionally, I would look to strengthen our city's Ethics and Audit Departments and their respective boards.

DISTRICT 11

Marcia Overstreet

QUALIFIED TO GOVERN

Q: What do you think is the most important role of the the city council?

A: The most important role of the City Council is to provide superior management of the best Quality of Life for all communities.

Q: Please describe, in sufficient detail, one professional accomplishment or contribution of which you are most proud. These examples should illustrate skills and capabilities you think apply to governing the City of Atlanta. These accomplishments may have occurred at any time in your personal, professional, or public life.

A: One accomplishment that I'm proud of is starting my business, Mommy Knows Best. It's a consulting firm launched in 2007 focused on the needs of professional, social and civic minded women who are balancing the demands of the workplace with the demands of being a mother. The consultancy focuses on support groups, networking, coaching, and lifestyle development. The latest project of Mommy Knows Best is a book that I authored. The book - Mommy Knows Best : Business Etiquette has been used during etiquette sessions in schools and organizations. I've donated the books to graduating high school seniors to aid in internship interview preparation and etiquette as well as the college application process. I'm sure that understanding the importance of decorum and being an expert communicator will help while governing the City of Atlanta. My excellent writing skills and organization will also be useful for writing policy.

Q: Please list or describe no more than 3 current and past activities you participated in as a private citizen (not an elected official) in which you have acquired skills and perspectives that will make you a stronger mayor. Include your role in the activity and the year(s) in which you were involved.

A: *This year (2016-17) acting on behalf of the Business Development Committee for NPU-R , I co-hosted an entrepreneurial workshop with WEOP (Women's Employment Opportunity Project, Inc.) for the community. It's clear to me that the residents of Atlanta are eager to learn all that they can about entrepreneurship and would benefit from job training. As a city council member I will build on AWDA (Atlanta Workforce Development Agency) as it is

another avenue for the city to play a role in training and placing people that need us most. *School year 2016-17 I mentored seniors at Douglass High School in Southwest Atlanta. I donated my book as an aid in the internship interview process. During mentoring, we also discussed tips about the college application process. While on council I will support the Board of Education's productive programs that will help educate our children and provide needed after school programs that will have a direct positive impact on future job readiness and growth.

CULTURE FIT

Q: What does it mean to be an Atlantantian/ATLien in 140 characters or less?

A: An ATLien is a resident that is TRUE to the legacy and future of Atlanta.

Q: What is a new slogan for our city that could unite Atlantans and highlight who we are as a people?

A: Atlanta, America's global connection!

DEMONSTRATES PEOPLE-CENTERED APPROACHES

Q: The City of Atlanta currently owns several hundred surplus properties that could be redeveloped. In deciding what to do with these properties, what is the role of community input and when should it take place?

A: The community should absolutely play a role in deciding how to repurpose surplus properties. We should have a series of Town Hall meetings while simultaneously conducting surveys both in person and electronically to collect opportunities and viewpoints.

Q: The NPU system was envisioned as a place for communities to engage with development in their neighborhoods. How would you, through your role in City Council, support the existing NPU system or seek to change it?

A: I strongly support our NPU system. I will continue to support the NPU system by making sure my council office (including myself) prioritizes attending the meetings regularly to update my neighbors of current issues and opportunities in the community.

PROACTIVE & RELENTLESS RELATIONSHIP-BUILDER

Q: Give an example of a time when you had to collaborate with many people and/or organizations, especially those who may not hold the same views as you do.

A: While holding a leadership position with AAMA (Auxiliary to the Atlanta Medical Association) I had to make several unpopular programming decisions. Our organization had outdated, irrelevant programs that needed to be streamlined. I made those hard decisions as President and was able to convey my process and purpose throughout my tenure.

Q: Think of one major Atlanta issue impacting the district you seek to serve and that needs to be tackled with a collaborative approach, how would you build relationships across the city and region with other governments, private enterprises, or organizations to effect change in our city?

A: My community needs council representation committed to fighting crime and maintaining a robust Public Safety sector. As councilperson I plan to:

- * Prioritize supporting our Public Safety Sector;
- * Constantly monitor job training partnership opportunities;
- * Support Beltline initiatives, as they will all be steered towards growth, active community engagement and education of green space use and expansion;
- * FOCUS on collaboration, business training and business support and safety.

STRONG INTEREST IN TRANSPARENCY

Q: What level of openness and transparency should the citizens of Atlanta expect from city government under your leadership?

A: City of Atlanta's residents deserve to have access to the people that we put in office. I plan to lead with an OPEN DOOR POLICY. I will implement a transparency policy as an agreement with my constituents ensuring they will have access to weekly updates of the Council's developments and affairs. I will follow up on each request from a resident and include the findings and/or resolutions in the weekly updates on a portal available to the public. I advocate for a PUBLIC balanced budget.

- * All residents should have access to the transparent policy portal. Furthermore, this portal should be user-friendly.

Q: Please describe any policies, programs, or ideas you are considering to increase the transparency of city government.

A: I plan to lead with an OPEN DOOR POLICY. I will implement a transparency policy as an agreement with my constituents ensuring they will have access to weekly updates of the Council's developments and affairs. I will follow up on each request from a resident and include the findings and/or resolutions in the weekly updates on a portal available to the public. I advocate for a PUBLIC balanced budget.

* I feel that we should strive to become a certified City of Ethics.

* All residents should have access to the transparent policy portal. Furthermore, this portal should be user-friendly.