

Abundant Housing Atlanta Candidate Questionnaire Responses (2025)

District 4

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What policies do you believe would be the most impactful in advancing the premises outlined in the Atlanta City Design?

The Atlanta City Design calls on us to welcome growth in a way that makes Atlanta more inclusive, sustainable, and equitable. To advance these premises, I believe the most impactful policies will be those that increase housing choice, protect legacy residents, and ensure that new growth is connected to transit, jobs, and amenities.

That means updating our zoning code to allow more “missing middle” housing types such as duplexes, triplexes, accessory dwelling units, and small-scale apartments so that Atlantans are not forced to choose only between single-family homes or luxury high-rises. It means expanding and strengthening inclusionary zoning so that publicly subsidized and publicly owned developments set aside affordable units at income levels that reflect the needs of our most vulnerable neighbors. It also means aggressively using vacant public land and stronger code enforcement tools to support community land trusts and permanently affordable housing.

We must also align growth with mobility and sustainability goals. Transit-oriented development, elimination of parking minimums, and even parking maximums in high-capacity transit corridors will allow us to build denser, walkable neighborhoods that reduce costs for families and cut carbon emissions. At the same time, property tax relief measures like circuit breakers and expanded exemptions will help legacy homeowners remain in their neighborhoods, while renter protections, expanded legal aid, and just-cause eviction policies will help stabilize those most at risk of displacement. Many of our needed tools are preempted by our state government, and it is important that we continue to work to chip away at those restrictions.

By combining these tools, including land use reform, affordability requirements, tenant protections, and equitable transit-oriented development, we can ensure that Atlanta’s growth truly reflects the principles of the City Design: more people, more diversity, and more opportunity for every neighborhood.

What is your position on increasing the types of housing (duplexes, triplexes, townhomes, cottage courts etc.) that can be built by-right (i.e. without re-zonings)?

I support increasing the types of housing that can be built by-right, including duplexes, triplexes, townhomes, accessory dwelling units, and cottage courts. Four years ago, I ran on the belief that Atlanta's housing crisis is driven by a shortage of supply, and that we must reduce barriers in our zoning policies to allow a greater diversity of housing choices. Since being elected, I have continued to champion zoning reforms and land use changes that create opportunities for more Atlantans to live in the neighborhoods of their choice without being forced into either single-family homes or large multifamily complexes.

In office, I have consistently supported policies that expand housing options while protecting legacy residents from displacement. I have also worked to center community-driven planning tools like Livable Centers Initiative studies, which in District 4 have called for more density and a mix of housing types. Allowing more missing middle housing by-right will reduce competition for limited units, help stabilize costs, and restore the diversity of housing that once defined Atlanta's most vibrant neighborhoods.

What parts of your district do you see as priority areas for more dense housing? Please be specific: specific neighborhoods, cross streets, etc.

Mechanicsville remains one of the highest priority areas in my district for more dense housing. Despite being directly adjacent to Downtown, it has more than 300 vacant parcels, including over 25 acres of publicly owned land that has sat dormant for decades. With no grocery store and limited amenities, Mechanicsville is in urgent need of new housing and commercial activity, and I believe density here can unlock the services residents have been asking for.

In the last four years, I have worked to turn these priorities into real results. At 405 Cooper Street, I championed the development of 100 units of apartment living for formerly homeless citizens. I have also supported 100 new townhomes that are being developed through a partnership between the City of Atlanta and the Atlanta Urban Development Corporation. And later this year, 250 new single-family units will break ground through Atlanta Housing, continuing our commitment to providing a range of housing options.

Beyond Mechanicsville, I see opportunities for additional density in West End near the MARTA station and the new Mall West End redevelopment and along Ralph David Abernathy Boulevard, where transit access and existing infrastructure can support more residents, especially considering the proximity to the Atlanta University Center. are places where new housing can both strengthen neighborhoods and expand access to jobs, schools, and amenities.

Are there any parts of your district where you think housing growth should NOT be allowed? Please be specific: specific neighborhoods, cross streets, etc.

I do not believe there are parts of my district where housing growth should be categorically prohibited. However, I believe that growth must occur within a framework that acknowledges and honors the history and character of our communities. District 4 is home to three neighborhoods that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and it is essential that new development

in these areas respects the historic fabric while still providing opportunities for current and future residents.

Growth in these communities should be guided by thoughtful design standards, strong community engagement, and a commitment to protecting legacy residents from displacement. By approaching growth in this way, we can ensure that new housing adds to the vibrancy of our neighborhoods without erasing the history and cultural identity that make them unique.

What are you hearing from your potential constituents about their hopes, fears, aspirations, and frustrations about this potential growth?

I continue to hear a mix of hopes and concerns from neighbors about Atlanta's growth. Many residents are excited about the potential for new amenities that density can bring, such as grocery stores, coffee shops, restaurants, and other services that our communities have long asked for. There is a real desire for investment that creates walkable, vibrant neighborhoods where families can thrive.

At the same time, many constituents remain worried about displacement, rising housing costs, and whether new development will truly reflect the character of their communities. Concerns about traffic and infrastructure capacity are also common, especially in neighborhoods that already feel stretched.

Over the past four years, I have worked to meet these concerns head-on by championing developments that provide deeply affordable housing, by supporting investments in public infrastructure, and by advocating for stronger renter protections and property tax relief for legacy homeowners. My goal is to ensure that growth does not come at the expense of the very people who have sustained our neighborhoods for generations, but instead creates opportunities for both legacy residents and new families to build their futures here.

Oftentimes, proposed developments that could help increase housing supply - including the affordable housing supply - for the City are met with intense local opposition. How will you balance the opinions of existing local neighbors with the overall needs of the City?

There is always a tension between the concerns of existing neighbors and the citywide need for more housing, and I believe the only way to address that tension is through communication, transparency, and thoughtful engagement. Four years ago, I said that while many communities argue there is already an abundance of affordable housing, much of that stock is naturally occurring and is being lost every day. That remains true, and it underscores why we must build new subsidized and affordable units to preserve affordability overall.

I also continue to believe that "filtering" is a real phenomenon in our housing market: today's new construction becomes tomorrow's affordable stock, but only if we are building enough to keep up with demand. If we fail to do so, competition for limited housing will drive prices up and even older units will be upgraded to capture that demand. Balancing local concerns with the city's needs means acknowledging these realities, engaging residents honestly about the consequences of

underbuilding, and ensuring that growth happens in ways that protect legacy neighbors while welcoming new families into our communities.

How should we fund our local affordable housing trust fund? Please be specific about which local sources Atlanta should consider.

I believe our local affordable housing trust fund must be both sustainable and transparent. When I came into office, the City committed to phasing in contributions from the general fund, beginning at 1 percent and ultimately reaching 2 percent. I supported that work and believe the City must continue honoring this commitment to ensure we have a stable base of funding year after year.

At the same time, we need to diversify the trust's revenue streams. One way to do this is through in-lieu fees and density bonuses tied to new development, giving developers flexibility while ensuring the city captures resources for affordable housing. We can also look to innovative models like Tempe's Hometown for All program, which dedicates a portion of permitting fees to affordable housing and has generated millions in additional voluntary contributions from developers. Atlanta can adopt a similar approach that directly links new growth to affordability.

Philanthropic partnerships and bond financing will continue to play a role, but they must complement the trust rather than consume it. The trust fund should be focused on creating and preserving deeply affordable housing, not primarily on paying down bond debt or covering administrative costs. That requires establishing clear guardrails, stronger oversight, and regular public reporting so residents can see exactly how dollars are being used.

By combining stable annual contributions, innovative funding models like Hometown for All, and transparency in how funds are spent, we can ensure the trust fund delivers on its promise to make housing more affordable and accessible for all Atlantans.

Every analysis of our City that looks at our needs by neighborhood identifies a divide, where some neighborhoods are amenity-rich (jobs, restaurants, grocery stores, medical services) and lack a high supply of affordable housing, while others lack many of those same amenities but offer relatively more affordable housing. How will you create City-wide policies that reflect these differences?

Atlanta's growth has highlighted a fundamental imbalance. In some neighborhoods, we see abundant amenities but limited affordable housing. In others, especially many in southwest Atlanta, we see affordability but too few amenities. City-wide policy must be designed to address both sides of this divide.

For amenity-rich neighborhoods, I believe we must expand inclusionary zoning requirements and strengthen affordability commitments on publicly owned land. That ensures that as new development comes online in high-demand areas, a share of those units remains accessible to working families. We must also continue to push for deeper levels of affordability in projects that receive public subsidy, so that the housing reflects the needs of residents who are most vulnerable to displacement.

As the City continues to observe thousands of Atlantans experiencing homelessness each year, how will you approach preventing bouts of homelessness and rehousing your constituents?

I continue to believe that housing-first policies are the most effective way to prevent and end homelessness. Providing stable housing allows people experiencing homelessness to build the foundation necessary for other support services to succeed. I also believe we must end the criminalization of poverty and mental health issues by investing in permanent supportive housing, wraparound services, and alternatives to jail for people in crisis.

Since taking office, however, I have also come to understand that the scale of this challenge demands regional solutions. The City of Atlanta, with a population of just over half a million, is often expected to provide services for a metro region of more than six million people. Programs like Housing Opportunities for People With AIDS are administered through the City, yet they serve residents across 29 counties. And too often, other jurisdictions direct people experiencing homelessness to Atlanta because of the concentration of services located here.

This imbalance is not sustainable. If we are serious about addressing homelessness, we need every jurisdiction in the metro region to share responsibility. That means working with counties, neighboring cities, and regional partners to coordinate resources, expand housing and services outside of the City of Atlanta, and ensure that no single community is carrying a disproportionate share of the burden. I will continue to advocate for a housing-first approach locally, while pushing for a stronger regional commitment so that we can deliver lasting solutions to homelessness across our entire metro area.

The City of Atlanta has begun implementing some innovative solutions to its homelessness problem, including using shipping containers as temporary shelter. How will you ensure that these efforts are able to grow and that neighborhoods across the City are part of the solution to our homelessness problem?

I have a strong record of supporting innovative approaches to homelessness, including carrying the legislation that authorized the shipping container project now known as The Melody, as well as the legislation that authorized 405 Cooper Street in Mechanicsville. These projects show what is possible when the City is willing to think creatively and act with urgency.

To ensure efforts like these are able to grow, we need to continue investing in pilot projects and then scaling those that prove effective. That requires not only funding but also coordination with service providers, wraparound support for residents, and a commitment to measuring outcomes so we can replicate success across the city.

It is also essential that every neighborhood in Atlanta be part of the solution. Too often, communities feel that homelessness services are concentrated in only a few areas, which creates inequities and resentment. By spreading projects across districts—whether through permanent supportive housing, transitional shelter, or innovative models like The Melody—we can build a more balanced system that integrates people experiencing homelessness into communities rather than isolating them.

As someone who has already led on legislation to bring these solutions forward, I will continue to champion innovative projects and ensure that our policies create both the housing and the supportive infrastructure needed to help our most vulnerable neighbors stabilize their lives.

Are there other policies you will advance to promote housing stability for existing residents?

Yes. Beyond expanding affordable housing and renter protections, I believe the City should be more intentional about creating programs that address the needs of specific vulnerable populations. For example, veterans make up nearly 10 percent of Atlanta's homeless population, yet federal and state resources dedicated to veterans' housing and supportive services are often underutilized at the local level. By building communities that specifically support veterans, we can connect residents to those resources and make meaningful progress in reducing homelessness overall.

I also support expanding direct rental assistance, utility support, and legal aid for tenants, which are proven tools for keeping people in their homes. For legacy homeowners, I will continue to advocate for property tax relief measures such as circuit breakers and expanded exemptions to prevent displacement as property values rise. Together, these policies can help stabilize families, protect communities, and ensure that Atlanta remains a city where residents at every income level can stay and thrive.

111 Moreland Ave: In 2023, the Reynoldstown Civic Improvement League's (RCIL) overwhelmingly voted in opposition to a proposal to build 42 homes for formerly homeless individuals (more details on the project here).

Incumbents: how did you vote on this proposal?

Non-Incumbents: given the information in the articles above, how would you have voted on this proposal?

Support

Please provide any rationale or considerations for how you voted / would have voted on 111 Moreland Ave.

Build more housing.

In 2025, City Council voted on a mixed use development proposal on Amsterdam Walk, which included retail and 1,100 apartments, including over 200 affordable apartments, in the Virginia Highlands neighborhood near the Beltline.

Incumbents: how did you vote on this proposal?

Non-Incumbents: given the information in the articles above, how would you have voted on this proposal?

Support

Please provide any rationale or considerations for how you voted / would have voted on Amsterdam Walk

Build more housing.

In 2022, a project, "Edgewood for Everyone," was proposed to build 48 homes on Whitefoord Ave. in the Edgewood neighborhood, 25% of which would have been priced at 60% area median income without government subsidy. A small group of neighbors loudly opposed the project during the Organized Neighbors of Edgewood zoning committee, resulting in the developers abandoning the proposal. Instead, they built housing that aligns with the existing zoning: 6 homes priced around \$900K each.

Do you believe that this is the preferred outcome?

No

Why do you/do you not believe this is the preferred outcome? What alternative process do you believe these kinds of projects should follow to result in a preferred outcome?

Admittedly I'm not as familiar with this project, but I do believe that we need to build more housing.

Why is housing affordability personal to you?

The #1 issue facing the residents of District 4 is displacement. Families who built Atlanta can no longer afford to stay in the city and reap the benefits they're owed from years of investing in our culture and history. The lapse of the eviction moratorium exacerbates something that's already been happening-our residents, neighborhoods, and institutions are changing at such a rapid pace that we're at risk of losing what makes our city so special. Essentially, what makes Atlanta, Atlanta.

It's traumatic. And I know how traumatic it is because I've experienced displacement. I've experienced eviction. I've experienced homelessness. I know what it's like to have the veneer of safety and security destroyed right before your eyes. I know what it's like to work for a grueling ten hours in a warehouse without air conditioning in the middle of August, only to come home to your grieving mother while your home of 16 years is raided by the DeKalb County Marshall and all of your personal effects thrown into the street. I know what it's like to have to rely on the generosity and grace of friends, family members, and neighbors just so that you can have a roof over your head. I know what it's like to sleep on couches and dirty mattresses. To live in a house without power and to huddle around an open gas oven because it's the dead of winter and you've weighed the options and you've chosen relative comfort over the peril of carbon monoxide poisoning.

My experience haunts me, and it absolutely drives me in my run for Atlanta City Council. But unfortunately, it's not my experience alone. Fulton County has one of the highest eviction rates in the country and I've seen many of my neighbors experience displacement in real time. And this is all happening at such a rapid pace. We've got to address displacement immediately.

What work have you done to advocate for housing?

Housing advocacy has been at the center of both my community work and my service on City Council. Before I was elected, I served as spokesperson for the Turner Field Community Benefits

Coalition, where I fought to ensure that legacy residents had a voice in major redevelopment decisions. That work led to a \$5 million community benefits fund that continues to support housing stabilization programs in neighborhoods surrounding the old Turner Field site.

Since taking office, I have carried and supported legislation that has directly advanced housing access and stability in District 4 and across Atlanta. I carried the legislation authorizing The Melody, the innovative shipping container housing project, and legislation that authorized new affordable housing at 405 Cooper Street in Mechanicsville. I also championed the development of 100 new townhomes through a partnership with the Atlanta Urban Development Corporation and supported Atlanta Housing's plan for 250 new single-family homes that will break ground this year.

At the citywide level, I have consistently supported increased funding for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and backed legislation committing the City to dedicate a greater percentage of the general fund toward affordable housing. I supported the \$100 million Housing Opportunity Bond, which is helping to finance affordable units across the city, and I have been a strong advocate for expanding inclusionary zoning, advancing zoning reforms that allow for "missing middle" housing, and strengthening tenant protections and property tax relief programs for legacy homeowners.

For me, this work is personal. I know firsthand what it feels like to experience displacement and eviction, and that drives my commitment to ensuring Atlanta families can stay in the communities they have built. My record shows that I will continue to fight for policies and investments that make housing more affordable, more stable, and more equitable for every Atlantan.

Is there anything else you'd like us to know about you as we consider our endorsement?

No single policy initiative is a cure-all, but when combined they can help ensure that more families are able to live in the communities of their choosing. Over the past four years, I have worked to turn that belief into action by championing zoning reforms, carrying legislation for innovative housing projects like The Melody, supporting the creation of new affordable townhomes and single-family units in District 4, and backing citywide funding measures such as the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and the Housing Opportunity Bond.

Updating our land use policies remains essential to creating more diverse housing choices beyond only large-scale multifamily developments or low-density single-family homes. I support expanding inclusionary zoning, density bonuses, and tax abatements so that developers can contribute to affordability while recapturing some of their costs. I also continue to believe in pairing equitable housing options with transit-oriented development so that residents can save money, access jobs and schools more easily, and strengthen our regional economy.

Finally, as we prepare for the City's population to grow by another million residents over the next 25 years, I believe we must act with urgency. That means eliminating outdated parking minimums and moving toward context-sensitive parking maximums tied to transit access, while ensuring that new development honors the history and identity of our communities. My experience as both an advocate and a legislator has prepared me to continue advancing these policies with transparency, urgency, and a commitment to equity.

