

*Which campaign are you representing? **

ACC Commission District 3

Yes or No Questions

For this section, please answer whether you support the following issues with a Yes or No answer only. Pick the answer that best suits your current opinion on the topic. If you feel the need to clarify, an optional 140 character sentence or two is allowed for each issue.

Every question should be interpreted to apply specifically to Athens-Clarke County (e.g. when we say "transit service," we mean Athens Transit).

*Do you support fare-free bus service? **

Yes

We have multiple bus systems in the smallest county in GA; it's time to look at consolidation.

*Do you support expansion of transit service (e.g. increased frequency, more locations, longer service hours)? **

Yes, but it will take systemic change to make it happen.

*Do you support marijuana decriminalization? **

Yes

It costs money/resources to enforce a law that needlessly disrupts lives.

*Do you support a fee or ban on single-use plastic bags? **

Yes

I'd also like to explore ways to reduce consumption of other single use plastics.

*Do you support repealing the single-family ordinance? **

Yes

We need to examine every possible angle to increase the stock of affordable housing.

*Do you support increasing the budget for bike and pedestrian infrastructure from the general fund? **

Yes

ACC is way behind on funding bike/ped infrastructure. TSPLOST will help alleviate the backlog, but we need annual funding to get ahead.

Do you support an Athens Civil Rights Committee established through the county government?

Yes. It's obvious that we have a need to address discrimination locally and a Civil Rights Committee would be a start to the conversation.

*Do you believe that Athens-Clarke County should move forward with comprehensive non-discrimination legislation? **

Yes

I would defer to the Civil Rights Committee's recommendations.

- 1. Rising rents and the proliferation of luxury student apartment complexes has been a major issue in town for the past several years. What will you do to promote affordable housing in Athens for its current residents?*

There is no silver bullet to change market forces - luxury student apartments are what banks will finance at this time. I do believe however, that for a long while, ACC has been "giving away" our leverage to address a variety of issues - affordable housing and alternative transportation infrastructure come immediately to mind. Perhaps we fear the "not business friendly" moniker?

Downzoning downtown and then providing density bonuses to developers that include or fund affordable housing is one way to harness that market to serve the greater community. Beyond that we need to increase housing opportunities for Athenians, relaxing rules on "granny flats", rehabilitating distressed properties through the Land Bank, further support for alternative models such as the Athens Land Trust and Habitat will all need to be employed. We need to provide permanent funding for our Affordable Housing Trust Fund and I support appointing a task force including commissioners, staff, local developers, Land Trust, Habitat and homeless advocates as representatives to provide momentum and focus to the issue.

- 1. County Attorney Bill Berryman has recommended inaction on certain issues in order to avoid, in his view, potential conflicts with state law. These issues have included operational funding in TSPLOST, marijuana decriminalization and comprehensive non-discrimination legislation. Citing his interpretations, the Mayor and Commission have elected to take little to no action on these and similar issues. Do you support a different approach, even if it may lead to Athens-Clarke County challenging state law?*

I think these would need to be addressed on a case-by-case basis. I don't agree with including operational funding in TSPLOST projects - operational expenses and even maintenance costs should be funded through more stable revenue streams.

The city of Clarkston, GA has shown that marijuana decriminalization can work.

We need a Civil Rights Commission with members who understand the mechanisms of discrimination within our community and any legislation that we enact should conform to the findings of that commission.

Further as we look for a replacement after Mr. Berryman retires, I believe we should hire an attorney that, while providing sound counsel, understands the progressive nature of our community and supports its goals.

- 1. White people still hold a hugely disproportionate amount of economic and social power in Athens-Clarke County. If elected, what will you do to help fight this structural imbalance, increase the economic security of, and ensure the equal treatment of Athenians of color; especially black Athenians who continue to be most targeted by past and present systems of oppression?*

I think that reversing years of discrimination/segregation will require building a "pipeline" to expand minority power and leadership in Athens. Envision Athens made a point of touting the demographic diversity of their Steering Committee. Regardless of the success of the overall

effort, I believe it provides a model for what public involvement in Athens should look like. Our boards, authorities, and senior government staff need to be similarly diverse.

In addition to my support of a Civil Rights Commission and an effort to increase affordable housing opportunities and transportation equity, I believe we need a process to assist neighborhoods in their efforts to organize. Predominately African American neighborhoods in Athens often face the danger of displacement through revitalization. We should listen to neighborhood residents and provide for them the tools to enhance stability and foster economic development that serves the residents of the neighborhood. Organization provides a mechanism to give the neighborhoods the voice to define those tools.

- 1. Lack of funding in the CAPS program means that there is an “early learning gap” of over 2,000 children in Athens. There is also a lack of quality rated childcare providers here. Turning this situation around would be quite expensive and difficult, but also extremely important to the lives of many Athenians. Do you support policies that would expand access to childcare subsidies, encourage more childcare providers to become quality rated, and incentivize Quality Rated providers to accept children receiving subsidies?*

Clearly the cost of adequate child care is a significant hurdle for low and moderate income Athenians. As such, increasing adequate child-care options would be beneficial. As with most issues, there are multiple factors at play. My understanding is that the lack of Quality Rated child care facilities is due in large part to the choice made by the providers to not go through the process - the certification process is costly and difficult and many would not expect to gain the three-star (top) rating. The CAP reimbursement process is slow and many smaller facilities can't handle the cash flow crunch caused by that reimbursement process.

One thing we could do to alleviate the child care labor shortage is to incorporate training for child care workers in the Career Academy curricula.

I am open to listening to and working for solutions that would ease the burden for our citizens.

- 1. The rates of poverty and income inequality in Athens remain extraordinarily high. What will you do to specifically support low-income and low-wealth Athenians?*

Income inequality is an issue all across America and will worsen under the current administration. Most of the questions asked thus far address some aspect of alleviating the effects of poverty, and as such require many different answers

- 1. What is your most important policy priority for 2018-2019?*

To merge land use planning and transportation planning because the two are inextricably linked. At the same time I would address the “silos” we have in local government - either by departmental design or through “pots” of funding. Despite the constant refrain that Athens is not “business friendly”, Athens-Clarke County has experienced unprecedented growth. Yet we always seem to “settle”. I think what's not business friendly is not having clear priorities, and therefore not being able to articulate exactly what we expect in terms of development.