

Candidate Questionnaire for Atlanta's 2025 Citywide Elections

Section I: Personal Background and Motivation

- Full Name: **Eshé P. Collins**
- Office Sought: **Post 3 At-Large, Atlanta City Council**
- Campaign Website and Social Media Handles: www.collinsforatlanta.com and **@collinsforatlanta**
- Brief Biography (max 250 words):
- **An Atlanta native and civil rights attorney, Eshé Collins represents Post 3 At-Large on the Atlanta City Council. She is recognized for her dedication to public service and her track record of tackling systemic disparities while strengthening communities. As the former past Chair and Vice Chair of the Atlanta Public Schools (APS) board, Eshé championed policies to expand educational opportunity, leading APS to its highest graduation rate, \$130 million in staff pay increases, and \$615 million in technology and infrastructure investments. Her leadership also secured a \$5 million early childhood education initiative and a master plan repurposing vacant properties for affordable housing.**

Eshé directs the Equity Assistance Center-South at the Southern Education Foundation, partnering with the U.S. Department of Education to deliver technical support in school districts across the South. She began her career as an elementary educator and has led national efforts for high-quality early education. Eshé holds degrees from Spelman College, Georgia State University, and North Carolina Central University School of Law, earning recognition in Georgia Trend's and Atlanta Business Chronicle's *40 Under 40* and Atlanta Business League's *100 Women of Influence*. A member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and The Links, Incorporated, her leadership reflects a dedication to social justice, community empowerment, and broader access to opportunity.

Section II: Priorities

1. What are your top three priorities if elected?
 - **As the Post 3 At-Large member, my top three priorities center on affordability, economic opportunity, and infrastructure—issues that affect every neighborhood across Atlanta. I am committed to expanding affordable housing so Atlantans of all incomes can live and thrive in our city, which means strengthening inclusionary zoning, investing in housing preservation, and supporting pathways to homeownership. I will also champion economic development that uplifts small businesses, fosters entrepreneurship, and ensures residents can access good-paying jobs by leveraging public-private partnerships to drive inclusive growth. In**

addition, I will prioritize infrastructure and city services—improving roads, sidewalks, water systems, and transit—while addressing climate resilience and sustainability. Of course, there are many more priorities across our city, and I look forward to collaborating with my fellow Council members to advance solutions that make Atlanta stronger, more connected, and more equitable for all.

Section III: Public Safety

2. The Atlanta Public Safety Training Center has sparked both support and opposition throughout our city. How do you view the Public Safety Training Center’s role in shaping the future of public safety, and how would you ensure it serves the needs of both first responders and the broader community?
- **The Public Safety Training Center must balance the need for well-trained first responders with the concerns of residents who feel unheard in the process. I believe public safety extends beyond policing—it includes trust, accountability, and community well-being. While training facilities are important, they must be transparent in operations, environmentally responsible, and responsive to community voices. As a Councilmember, I will push for stronger oversight, community input, and programming that integrates de-escalation, mental health response, and community engagement into training. The Training Center should not just prepare officers but also reflect Atlanta’s values of safety, equity, and shared responsibility.**

Section IV: Transportation and Infrastructure

3. Traffic congestion, caused by delivery trucks and rideshare vehicles, physically blocks travel lanes on major roads like Peachtree and Piedmont. How can we ensure that this dangerous practice stops?
- **Traffic congestion from these factors are both dangerous and disruptive to daily life in Atlanta. To address this, we must combine enforcement with smart infrastructure solutions. I support expanding designated loading zones, curbside management, and technology that directs drivers to available spaces in real time. At the same time, we need stricter penalties for vehicles that block travel lanes, paired with increased coordination with delivery and rideshare companies to encourage compliance. By modernizing traffic management and prioritizing pedestrian and commuter safety, we can keep our roads moving while supporting Atlanta’s growing economy and mobility needs.**
4. What is your vision for revitalizing the Lindbergh area and addressing the visible blight along Piedmont Road, a key gateway into Buckhead? How would you work with city agencies and law enforcement to improve safety and aesthetics in this high-priority corridor?

- **As an Atlanta native, I know how much Lindbergh has long been regarded as a vital corridor into Buckhead and a key part of our city. However, visible blight and safety concerns demand bold, coordinated action. My vision is to revitalize the area through strategic redevelopment that attracts mixed-use investment, small businesses, and green spaces, while ensuring affordability and accessibility for residents. I will work with city agencies to streamline and strengthen code enforcement, build strong partnerships with property owners for impactful community engagement, and leverage economic development tools to transform vacant and underutilized properties. Alongside APD and community stakeholders, I will prioritize public safety, lighting, and pedestrian-friendly improvements, restoring Lindbergh as a thriving, welcoming destination we all remember it to be.**
5. Buckhead lacks sufficient sidewalk infrastructure, particularly in some residential neighborhoods and near schools, making walking uncomfortable and unsafe for many residents. While progress has been made in the commercial core, large portions of the community remain disconnected. What specific policies or funding strategies would you support to accelerate and incentivize sidewalk construction throughout Buckhead?
- **Safe, connected sidewalks are essential for walkability, mobility, and quality of life. While Buckhead has made progress in commercial areas, too many residential neighborhoods and school zones remain unsafe for pedestrians. I support prioritizing sidewalks in the City's capital improvement plan, leveraging impact fees from new development, and pursuing state and federal transportation grants (if available) dedicated to pedestrian infrastructure. I would also advocate for stronger public-private partnerships, encouraging businesses and developers to invest in walkability improvements. Just as important, community engagement is essential—especially where opinions may be divided—to build consensus and ensure solutions reflect neighborhood needs and shared priorities.**

Section V: Education - Atlanta Public Schools (APS)

6. Many schools throughout Atlanta are currently facing significant under-enrollment. As part of the ongoing Facilities Master Plan, the APS Board is considering recommendations for school consolidations and redistricting by late 2025. Specifically, APS has circulated a [recent plan under community review](#) that outlines various scenarios that could repurpose and consolidate existing facilities. What is your position on potential school closures or consolidations within APS? How do you believe these changes could impact schools in Buckhead, which currently experience some of the highest enrollment levels in the district?
- **School closures and consolidations are always difficult decisions because schools are more than buildings—they are anchors for families and neighborhoods. As APS considers these recommendations, my priority is ensuring transparency, equity, and meaningful community engagement. In areas of under-enrollment, consolidation may be necessary to maximize resources and improve programming.**

For Buckhead, where schools face over-enrollment, proposed changes highlight the need for thoughtful solutions. It is pivotal for families not only to share feedback but also to suggest alternatives APS leadership may not have considered. Ultimately, the goal must be to strengthen learning opportunities for all students while maintaining thriving school communities.

Section VI: Watershed

7. Considering the recurring and increasingly severe flooding events along Peachtree Creek, what specific policies or infrastructure investments would you advocate for to mitigate future flood risks and protect vulnerable neighborhoods? How will we pay for these?
 - **Recurring flooding along Peachtree Creek underscores the urgency of resilient infrastructure and proactive planning. I would advocate for green infrastructure—such as expanded retention ponds, upgraded stormwater systems, and restored natural floodplains—to reduce runoff and protect neighborhoods. We must also prioritize stricter development standards in flood-prone areas to prevent future risks. Funding should come from a combination of city capital improvement dollars, resilience and infrastructure grants (if available), and partnerships with state agencies. By leveraging multiple funding streams and coordinating across jurisdictions, we can invest in long-term solutions that protect vulnerable communities while strengthening Atlanta’s ability to withstand future climate challenges.**
8. The city has experienced multiple water main breaks and wastewater spills in recent years. What specific policies or oversight mechanisms would you support to prevent future infrastructure failures?
 - **Atlanta’s repeated water main breaks and wastewater spills highlight the urgent need for stronger infrastructure investment and accountability. Under longstanding federal consent decrees, the City has already committed to repairing and upgrading its water and sewer systems, but progress must accelerate. I would advocate for an updated comprehensive asset management plan that prioritizes replacing aging pipes, modernizing monitoring technology, and creating rapid response protocols. Oversight should include transparent public reporting and regular audits to ensure compliance. By leveraging federal infrastructure funds and state partnerships, we can meet consent decree obligations, prevent future failures, and restore trust in Atlanta’s essential services.**

Section VII: Tree Protection Ordinance (TPO)

9. Buckhead contains the majority of Atlanta’s tree canopy and has seen significant community concern regarding the finalized Tree Protection Ordinance (TPO). How would you balance the need for development with the goal of protecting Atlanta’s urban forest, especially in rapidly growing neighborhoods? What new policies or solutions, if any, would

you support to strengthen the Tree Protection Ordinance (TPO) code enforcement process, currently managed by the Arborist Division within the Department of City Planning?

- **Atlanta’s tree canopy is one of our greatest assets, and Buckhead plays a critical role in preserving it. While development is necessary for growth, it must be balanced with protecting our urban forest. I support strengthening the Tree Protection Ordinance by expanding enforcement capacity within the Arborist Division, ensuring developers are held accountable for mitigation and replacement requirements. Policies should incentivize preservation during construction and prioritize planting in areas with canopy loss. I would also advocate for greater transparency through public reporting and community engagement. I firmly believe that protecting our trees is essential for combating climate change, improving air quality, and preserving Atlanta’s character.**

Section VIII: Final Thoughts – How Buckhead can Help the City of Atlanta

10. In what ways can the Buckhead community actively support the priorities you’ve set for your district or post within the City of Atlanta? Where do you believe Buckhead can have the most meaningful impact in advancing Atlanta’s overall growth, prosperity, and quality of life?
- **Buckhead is one of Atlanta’s most dynamic communities, and its active engagement is essential to advancing the priorities I’ve set for our city. Residents and businesses can play a meaningful role by supporting policies that expand affordable housing, improve infrastructure, and strengthen small businesses—ensuring that Buckhead’s prosperity contributes to Atlanta’s overall growth. Community members can also partner with the City on sustainability initiatives, from preserving our tree canopy to advancing climate resilience strategies. Collaboration across the city is essential, as many neighborhoods experience the same challenges Buckhead faces. This is where my leadership as a citywide Councilmember is imperative to meet these goals and ensure solutions benefit all communities. Beyond policy, Buckhead’s civic organizations, neighborhood associations, and business leaders have the capacity to foster collaboration, volunteerism, and investment in programs that uplift youth, enhance public safety, and improve quality of life across Atlanta.**