



GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

GBC's 2020 Baltimore City Election Coverage
City Council President Candidate Questionnaire

CANDIDATE: JOVANI PATTERSON (R)

The Greater Baltimore Committee has identified key policy priorities to drive discussion in the 2020 Citywide Elections. The priorities are:

1. Prioritize enhanced coordination across criminal justice agencies and support evidence-based crime reduction strategies to improve public safety.
2. Implement strategic and inclusive economic development strategies to attract and retain businesses and residents.
3. Exert solid, steady leadership to stabilize Baltimore City government and create a culture of integrity, transparency, and efficiency.
4. Support education and workforce development programs that prepare Baltimore residents for family-supporting jobs in high-growth industries and create programs or initiatives to attract talent to Baltimore City.
5. Utilize policy, funding, and intergovernmental coordination strategies to enhance Baltimore City's transportation and mobility infrastructure and operations.

Disclaimer: As a 501(c)4 organization, the Greater Baltimore Committee does not endorse candidates for public office. The information contained on this page and all engagement activities surrounding the election are for educational purposes only.

- 1. Prioritize enhanced coordination across criminal justice agencies and support evidence-based crime reduction strategies to improve public safety.**
 - **What legislative actions, if any, would you propose as City Council President to reduce crime and improve public safety in the City?**

The allowance of crime and violence is a result of a disarmed and dependent population. Therefore, I would encourage individuals to obtain concealed carry permits and have a stance within their neighborhoods. Also, we would work to ensure cases are resolved as it commonly known that most killings are committed by repeat offenders. We will also work that murder cases are tried outside of the city due to the corruption in the city's judicial system.

- **How would you allocate City budget dollars to crime reduction and public safety efforts? Please be specific regarding funding levels and programs compared to the current budget.**

No response provided.

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2. Implement strategic and inclusive economic development strategies to attract and retain businesses and residents.

- **Do you have ideas or suggestions to reform the property tax structure in the City?**

Lower the property tax rate while reducing the number of vacant and abandoned properties in the city. As the tax rate is lowered, property sales will become attractive in the city, as well as increasing the tax base by having less vacant homes.

- **What are your top three priorities or programs to grow Baltimore's tax base?**

Innovation - reward innovative contracts to City Residents that can help improve or optimize city functions and/or services. Decrease the number of Vacant Homes by finding ways to bring Industry music, entertainment, automotive and other opportunities to the city. Create competition within schools so that schools can be among nation's best and excelling students are rewarded. Baltimore is already home to several finance and manufacturing industries that should have a well-prepared talent pool by the way of city educated kids. We need to forge partnerships between these industries and the school systems.

3. Exert solid, steady leadership to stabilize Baltimore City government and create a culture of integrity, transparency, and efficiency.

- **Baltimore City is at a crossroads and in need of strong, ethical leadership. Why are you the best candidate to lead the City Council into a new decade and chapter?**

My operating principles are Truth, Love, and Forgiveness. All of which are needed in this City. Transparency is very important to me and I believe Baltimore communities should be well aware of where every dollar is spent and the tax-payer benefit of that dollar.

- **What are three actions that you would take to improve transparency and efficiency in the City Council operations and across City government as a whole?**

Establish a community partnership committee to include residents of the city in the investigation of where city funds are going. As a result, we can find ways to reduce the amount of frivolous city-spending as well as city positions.

- **How would you structure the Council under your leadership to carry out the roles and responsibilities of the City Council most effectively and efficiently?**

No response provided.

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- **Several charter amendments have been proposed and are pending legislative review and approval.**
 - **What is your position on the composition and function of the Board of Estimates?**

As it stands, there is plenty room for corruption on the Board of Estimates. Two of the 5 voting members are appointed by confirmation of City Council, thus there are no dissenting opinions on the Board.

- **What is your position on granting the City Council with the authority to increase or move appropriations in budget category?**

I would be OK with this as long as it is done in a transparent manner. This is another area where corruption can occur.

4. Support education and workforce development programs that prepare Baltimore residents for family-supporting jobs in high-growth industries and create programs or initiatives to attract talent to Baltimore City.

- **Under the recommendations of the Kirwan Commission, Baltimore City stands to receive an additional \$500 million annually in State education aid by Fiscal 2030. In order to receive this additional funding, Baltimore City must increase its investment as well, by \$330 million annually by Fiscal 2030. According to Maryland Department of Legislative Services figures, Baltimore City currently spends less than 15% of its budget on education compared to a statewide average of 36%. What do you propose the City should do to meet the increased funding obligations? Please be specific in identifying areas or agencies that will see reduced appropriations as well as revenues that may be increased.**

First, we would need to investigate if the funding is needed. The school systems aren't fixed by just throwing money at them. While I understand we the latest and greatest in technology and state-of-the-art schools, we may not NEED additional funding to make it happen. We need to evaluate where the current money is spent. Instead of creating and opening more positions on North Avenue, more of the money dedicated to schools and education should reach the actual teachers and students.

- **Currently, 0.2% of the City's budget is dedicated to workforce development. What is your position on increased funding for workforce training and adult education programs to reduce unemployment and adequately prepare City residents for jobs in high-demand industries?**

I believe this is a matter of supply and demand. If Baltimore was in a position where there were more jobs than people ready to fill them, then naturally, those employers would create workforce programs to hire and recruit competitive talent. We currently have industry trying to leave Baltimore. Thus, in many cases, if you were trained in a skill, you'd still have to leave the city for employment or opportunity.

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5. Utilize policy, funding, and intergovernmental coordination strategies to enhance Baltimore City's transportation and mobility infrastructure and operations.

- **What is your position on transportation policy and funding in the City? What, if any, policy priorities do you have regarding transportation and mobility?**

Streets and roads need to have a resurfacing schedule.

- **Do you support enhanced investment in transportation infrastructure, including that for pedestrians, bicycles, and scooters?**

Yes.

- **Recently, the City Council created a Transportation Committee of the City Council. Do you support the continuation of this Committee?**

This is something I would continue to support.