



# GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

## GBC's 2020 Baltimore City Election Coverage Mayoral Candidate Questionnaire

### **CANDIDATE: BRANDON SCOTT (D)**

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 are three actions that you would take in your first year to improve public safety?

*Our city is in the midst of one of the worst public safety epidemics it has ever faced. Since 2015, there have been over 1,600 homicides, 3,300 non-fatal shootings, and nearly 3,500 fatal overdoses in Baltimore City. To me, these are not just numbers, they represent lives cut short, children without parents, parents without children, and communities overcome with trauma.*

*The violence our city continues to experience, disproportionately in Baltimore's Black and historically redlined neighborhoods, is what motivated me as a young man from Park Heights to become a public servant. I am running for Mayor to transform our city's approach to crime reduction, from being*

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*focused solely on law enforcement to a comprehensive, holistic approach to public safety that centers public health.*

*Baltimore cannot arrest or prosecute its way out of this problem. Baltimore's violence results from generational trauma, structural racism, lack of opportunity, and systemic under-investment in our city's youth and families. We will only sustain reductions in crime if our approach is comprehensive — grounded in the immediate action we can take today while simultaneously addressing the root causes of violence.*

*Ending violence will require us to stop the flow of illegal guns that end up on our streets and actively target the small groups of people who commit the vast majority of murders, shootings, and aggravated assaults in Baltimore. We must also prioritize the opioid crisis, which fuels street-level, open-air drug markets and has intensified with the emergence of fentanyl.*

*We deserve to live in neighborhoods that are safe and secure, where the public health of our communities comes first and where our children can grow and thrive. City leaders and law enforcement agencies will never be able to do this alone. We must ask what every single city agency and institution that interacts with our residents can do to stop the violence and improve quality of life.*

### *1. Implement a Group Violence Reduction Strategy*

*The struggle for public safety is multifaceted, but must begin with addressing the record levels of gun violence in our communities. As Mayor, my most urgent charge will be removing guns and repeat violent offenders from the streets.*

*Gun violence in Baltimore has historically been committed by small groups of violent repeat offenders in defined areas of the city. In our hardest hit neighborhoods, residents should not feel terrorized by what police term "violent criminal networks," which seemingly occupy communities. Under my leadership, we will identify violent criminal networks and remove them from our neighborhoods through consistent, targeted pressure and coordinated information sharing with our law enforcement agencies.*

*We must bring more credible mentors into this work, strengthen partnerships with the re-entry community, provide people with real opportunities to turn their lives around, and better connect resources with people who need them most. Reducing gun violence will require us to focus our resources and offer real alternatives to a life of crime.*

*In the past, Baltimore had some success reducing violence using a similar approach, but did not invest enough in creating true opportunities that had the potential to change conditions. Cities that have implemented a group violence reduction strategy, like New Orleans, have seen consistent gun violence reductions. Baltimore City has the resources to effectively do the same.*

### *2. Get Illegal Guns and Ammunition Off the Streets*

*We must get illegal guns off the streets through enforcement and prosecution. If we don't know who is making illegal guns and ammunition available on our streets, we will not solve this problem.*

*As Chair of the City Council Public Safety Committee, I led the way for Baltimore to use the "Crime Gun Intelligence Center" model, which provides BPD an opportunity to track illegal guns and ammunition. While this model already exists, it is not being used to its fullest extent. As Mayor, I will increase our*

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*commitment to tracking guns and ammunition used in crimes to their origin. I will also foster our relationships with state, regional, and federal law enforcement partners.*

### *3. Implement a Comprehensive, Holistic Public Safety Vision for Baltimore*

*We will never police our way out of the challenges we face as a city. The public health of our city encompasses more than just illness. We must improve all social determinants of health, including the social, physical, and mental wellbeing of every Baltimore resident, all through the lens of equity. Addressing the inequities that lead to victimization, insecurity, and violence is a prerequisite for a safer, more stable city. Breaking the cycle of violence will require us to prioritize the mental health and wellbeing of all Baltimoreans.*

*As Mayor, I will officially declare gun violence a public health crisis. Baltimore residents deserve to live in neighborhoods that are safe and secure, where public health is centered and where people of all ages can grow and thrive. City leaders and law enforcement agencies will never do this alone. We must ask what every single city agency and institution that touches the lives of people in this city can do to stop the violence and preserve life.*

*One of the most untold stories in Baltimore's struggle with crime is the trauma our residents, especially our young people, experience and internalize as they routinely see violence occur around them. I refuse to allow this reality to be normalized. Under my leadership, a trauma team will respond to each shooting and homicide to triage survivors of gun violence, their families, and their communities.*

*These trauma response teams will consist of mental health professionals, social workers, community based organizations, local clergy, local mediators, and victim advocates. They will provide immediate trauma support, coordinate community vigils and safety walks, and connect victims with City resources. Police will share information with these professionals to ensure those impacted receive continuing support and constant communication where appropriate. These teams will be staffed by employees of the Health Department and assigned to work in each of the city's nine police districts.*

*I will commit to measuring the impact of every program, policy, and initiative so we can invest more deeply in what works and move away from what doesn't. To hold myself accountable, I will aim to reduce homicides by 15% in each year of my term, getting us below 300 homicides in my first year as Mayor.*

*I believe deeply that tackling our challenges in an urgent and holistic way will allow us to unlock Baltimore's full potential in the process.*

- **As Mayor, what steps would you take to improve coordination across federal, state, and local criminal justice agencies and with the Judiciary?**

*Many of the illegal guns used to commit violent crimes in Baltimore come from neighboring states. If we are going to reduce gun violence in Baltimore, we must stop the flow of illegal guns into our communities. As Mayor, I will target illegal gun traffickers and straw purchasers who funnel illegal guns into the city by establishing partnerships between BPD, our neighboring jurisdictions, and other federal agencies like the ATF and FBI. I will ensure people who illegally bring guns into our city are better held accountable.*

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*When gun cases get dropped because of unconstitutional policing or investigative practices, people who committed violent crimes can end up back on the streets. As Chair of the Public Safety Committee, I investigated why gun cases were getting dropped. I discovered neither the State's Attorney's Office nor BPD was even tracking or analyzing this data. As a result, I fought to secure funding for a data analyst position within the State's Attorney's Office to track cases and identify why charges are being dropped. This data will help the State's Attorney better prepare her attorneys and BPD strengthen its training and investigative practices.*

*As Mayor, I will take a data-driven and analytical approach to criminal justice issues. If chronic instances of unconstitutional policing or bad investigative work are leading to dropped cases, we should know and be prepared to take action to confront it. I will also increase funding to implement a crime analyst program within the State's Attorney's Office to review all cases involving violent repeat offenders. This data will improve our case preparation to ensure cases have a higher probability of being successfully prosecuted and appropriately sentenced.*

*Additionally, I will require BPD to step up training on constitutional search-and-seizure practices, interrogation, and report writing so that no case is dropped because a police officer failed to act in accordance with the law. As Mayor, I will strongly prioritize accountability within BPD. Through active participation in the Consent Decree process, reviewing the policies and procedures of the police department, frequently calling for audits and internal investigations, and strengthening community oversight, we can identify patterns and trends that need to be corrected and hold wrongdoers accountable.*

*Our partners at the state and federal levels also track data, which aids in our ability to target criminal networks operating in our neighborhoods. Additionally, the Maryland Department of Public Safety has information about people returning to our communities. We can use this data to make sure we are supporting residents returning home from prison by making sure they have the resources and support they need for successful re-entry. At the same time, when people violate the law, we will ensure swift action is taken so they are no longer a danger to their community. As Mayor, I will also strengthen our data sharing practices and working relationships with relevant state and federal partners to aid in our fight against gun violence.*

*As a city with so many gun offenses, it makes sense to have a dedicated court system that focuses on gun cases in Baltimore. As Mayor, I will advocate for creating gun courts in Baltimore City. Gun courts have shown promise in cities like Philadelphia and Rochester to reduce recidivism and connect defendants to social services, rather than focusing merely on punishment.<sup>7</sup> They also do a better job of efficiently processing cases, which is beneficial for safety and for justice. The use of these courts for juvenile and adult offenders will be instrumental in improving the outcomes of cases and saving lives.<sup>8</sup>*

*In each year of my first term, my goal is to reduce homicides and non-fatal shootings by 15%. By fully supporting the Consent Decree process to ensure our officers are policing in a constitutional way, partnering with our local, state, and federal law enforcement partners, and fully implementing a coordinated, holistic, data-driven approach to public safety, we can do this. While we know we must focus on the root causes for sustainable reductions to violence, we must also act with urgency to address the immediate causes of violence today.*

*As Mayor, I will commit to fully implementing the Consent Decree between BPD and the United States Department of Justice. The Consent Decree implementation process involves evaluating and revamping every element of BPD's policies and training procedures identified by DOJ, including stop and seizure, use of force, and de-escalation. Other cities that have undergone this process have seen fewer*

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*complaints against officers and increased trust between police and the communities they serve, without any corresponding increase in crime.<sup>9</sup> This makes sense. Reforming BPD around constitutional policing is a prerequisite for residents to have trust in their department. Without that trust, residents will continue to feel uneasy about helping BPD effectively prevent and solve crime. As Mayor, I will support the Consent Decree process to help BPD earn residents' trust and become reliable resources in the community.*

- What are your plans to address “squeegee kids” and panhandlers in City intersections?

*It is not okay for anyone, no matter how old or how young, to commit an act of violence against someone or damage their vehicle. All incidents of assault should be reported. Some of the individuals squeegeeing are not young people, but are adults. Having grown up in a neighborhood in Baltimore where economic opportunities were scarce, I understand what many of these men are going through. We know that many of the people who engage in this activity are generating income for their families, be it for bills, toiletries, or the rent. As a city, we have to be cognizant of the forces that drive so many people to engage in this activity on the corner. That won't be a quick fix.*

*We must provide alternatives and opportunities for the young people in our City. We will do this by enhancing what we already do: mentorship, expanded recreation center hours and programming, and a serious investment in YouthWorks. But we will also completely re-envision how we do other things. Whether TANF, CDBG, and the procurement rules, my administration will explore every avenue for making sure that our finite City, State, and Federal funds are having the greatest possible impact on our young people.*

*Despite the evidence about mentoring's impact, hundreds of young Baltimoreans are on a list waiting for someone to mentor them. As Mayor, I will focus on getting quality mentors for young people Baltimore neighborhoods most impacted by gun violence. I will also ensure organizations providing mentorship services have the support and funding they need.*

*During the 2019 budget year, my colleagues and I fought to expand our city's recreation center hours to give kids an outlet and safe space on Saturdays, not just weekdays. As Mayor, I will secure the funding to keep our rec centers open seven days a week so our young people always have somewhere to go.*

*At every recreation center, my administration will work with the Department of Recreation and Parks to establish Police Athletic League (PAL) Programming where it does not already exist. PAL programming helps reduce crime and violence by providing mentorship, recreational enrichment, and educational resources to youth who participate.*

*Every dollar invested in our young people returns dividends that compound over time. This is especially true given the current lack of activities available for youth, particularly during the summer.*

*As Mayor, I will take YouthWorks from a 5-week program to a year-round opportunity so that our young people can access meaningful jobs that prepare them for the workforce. I will also strengthen pathways for public safety careers for interested high school students and bridge the service gap across neighborhoods in Baltimore during summer break.*

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

- What strategies or programs would you put into place to encourage businesses and residents to move to Baltimore City?

*As Mayor, I am committed to implementing strategies that encourage businesses and residents to move to Baltimore City. My first priority is to invest in programs and policies that will radically transform and rapidly improve the quality of basic city services. We are not going to be able to attract new businesses or residents if core city services are not reliably provided, or if people do not trust our elected officials and institutions. Businesses and residents will be more inclined to relocate to the City if they can be sure that the streets are paved, trash is picked up on time, and constituent issues are handled in an efficient and equitable manner. We must start with the basics.*

*We must also consider the transportation crisis this City faces. Too many residents are left without a car, nor a reliable public transportation system to get them to and from work. It will be a top priority in my administration to rapidly increase funding for shared mobility options by leveraging local dollars to increase state and federal funding. On this front, I look forward to standing with GBC as it advocates for improved transit and transportation options for Baltimore City and the region.*

*Moreover, we can and should look at how other similarly sized cities have invested in economic resiliency while fostering economic development reflective of 21st century businesses. For example, Mayor Berke of Chattanooga recognized that the city must evolve from an industrial town to one where "frequent...intellectual and creative collisions would result in knowledge spillovers." He created a city-owned internet utility that provides the fastest internet in the world, created an Innovation District with city-financed subsidies to cluster start-ups with well-established businesses, and since he's taken office in 2013, Chattanooga's population has doubled. Part of this work was funded through a grant from the National League of Cities, a national organization in which I have been an active member for years, and where I am currently the Chair of the National Committee of the Large Cities Council. As Mayor, I am committed to leveraging my national network to bring in fresh talent, ideas, funding, and people to this great City.*

*Finally, we need to think strategically about how to better incorporate Baltimore diverse, thriving arts scene into a cohesive economic development strategy. As Mayor, I am committed to creative, arts-based policy and program choices that will make our streets safer, give people more jobs, strengthen our health care sector, diversify our workforce, encourage immigrants to choose Baltimore, and ensure the preservation of affordable housing opportunities.*

- What strategies or programs would you put into place to encourage existing businesses and residents to stay and expand in Baltimore City?

*As mayor, I am committed to exploring as many viable policy and program options as possible to encourage existing businesses and residents to stay and expand in Baltimore City. Some of these proposals include: a second location business grant, expanding BDC's small business incubator - including expanding seed funding options, and expedited permitting opportunities for good faith business owners. Additionally, I am committed to establishing a formal workgroup that maintains an open dialogue across Baltimore's businesses to better understand their role in our local economy and what they need to support sustainable economic development in our communities.*

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*Every Baltimorean deserves to live in a competently functioning City, where they can have faith in their local elected officials and the delivery of basic services. Crime and the condition of our neighborhoods go hand-in-hand. Vacant buildings, empty lots, and businesses that operate as fronts for illegal activity create an atmosphere that gives way to drug use, dumping, and violence in our neighborhoods. As a city, we can better coordinate our efforts to provide housing stability, make our code enforcement system more responsive, hold absentee landlords accountable, better maintain vacant lots, and end lead poisoning in the City of Baltimore once and for all. We have our work cut out for us, but I believe we can make great progress when we acknowledge our challenges honestly and set out to move the needle.*

*Finally, we should be having honest conversations with our partners in the business community about what the future of work in this city, and country will look like. NLC's "The Future of Work in Our Cities Report" details policy recommendations to adapt to an ever-changing economic landscape that meets the needs of diverse business owners. As mayor, I am committed to investing in infrastructure needed to support 21st century businesses - particularly broadband access, and ensuring our roads and bridges adapt to shared mobility needs, as well as workspace models that are adaptable in an economy bolstered by freelance work opportunities.*

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

*As a life-long Baltimorean, I understand and share residents' frustrations with the high property tax on Baltimore City homeowners and businesses. It puts us at a competitive disadvantage, when compared to surrounding counties. High property taxes not only dissuade potential home buyers, but cost those who do choose to buy in the city potentially hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost equity over a homeowner's lifetime. This is deeply inequitable to the City's homeowners.*

*However, our City's budget is heavily dependent on property taxes to fund basic city services. That is why I am looking forward to the study that the Department of Finance has commissioned from Ernst and Young to evaluate our City's tax structure, as well as their reform recommendations. I also commit to revisiting the Blue Ribbon Committee on Taxes and Fees Report from 2007.*

*But I must be clear, any changes to the property tax structure must be holistic and reasoned, particularly in the face of the proposed Kirwan Commission's \$330 million contribution to Baltimore City Schools by 2030.*

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

*As mayor, I am committed to growing Baltimore's tax base through increased funding and coordination of the following priority areas: individual and shared mobility infrastructure, workforce development, and increasing home-buying incentives for working and middle class renters and potential residents.*

*I will increase funding for transportation efforts, as well as advocating for policies, like modifications to child support enforcement and driver's license suspension policies that are serious barriers to workforce participation. Through a stronger transportation network, we can attract new residents and increase current residents' participation in the workforce, thus increasing our city's income tax base.*

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*To grow Baltimore's tax base, we must empower an adequately trained workforce to grow our tax base and grow our businesses. I will direct my City Administrator to expand and improve the work of the Mayor's Office of Employment Development, as well as advocate for increased funding to evidence-based workforce training programs like EARN (Employment Advancement Right now).*

*Finally, I am committed to expanding city-financed home-buying incentives for potential buyers who are ineligible for income-based incentives, like those offered by nonprofits across the city. Too many Baltimoreans are rent-burdened, and if we want to grow our City's business, economy, and tax base, we must make it easier for people to buy homes, especially given the City's current property tax structure.*

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 into a new decade and chapter?

*This is the most important election in a generation. After the turmoil of the previous administration and its associated scandals and after having two of the past four mayors leave office in disgrace, Baltimore needs a mayor who will honor the office and who does not seek the office for his own gain, and who is not wedded to the status quo. Remember, I am the only one in this race who has anything to lose. But I am not afraid of being unelected for doing the right thing.*

*On this issue, I have walked the walk. I have released the past five years of my tax returns. And since taking office as Council PResident, I have demonstrated a commitment to ethics reform legislation. In the months since I took office, the City Council has passed a number of important ethics reforms bills and has made significant progress on passing others. We have closed the Healthy Holly loophole, strengthened the City's disclosure and filing rules, and I have introduced legislation that will clarify the rules around soliciting gifts from lobbyists. Under my leadership, this Council is moving to provide the Board of Ethics the resources it needs to more effectively police the City's ethics laws.*

- What are three actions that you would take to improve transparency and efficiency in City government?

*1. To make our public safety strategy effective, it is critical that we track where, when, and how crime occurs, while also analyzing that data to identify trends and better allocate resources. Baltimore was once a leader in using data in city governance. While the City and BPD continue to track data, we have moved away from using it as an accountability measure. As Mayor, I will refocus our efforts to use data to inform decisions and to hold agency heads accountable for their performance. I will also expand the way we use data so that city services work better for our neighborhoods most affected by gun violence and disinvestment.*

*As Mayor, I will rebuild BPD's program that tracks crime data and use that information to inform deployment, action, and resources. Multiple shootings on the same block in the same month should trigger not only a shift in BPD patrol strategy, but also the deployment of city services and resources with a sense of urgency.*

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*To bring all the data we track into alignment, I will revamp the parallel, city government program that tracks performance data in all agencies. This should be used to hold department and agency leadership accountable to that performance. But also, this data can and should inform our efforts to reduce violent crime, too. To provide the most impacted neighborhoods with the resources they need, we must ensure our agencies fulfill their core functions equitably. This goes for filling potholes, cleaning up trash, and clearing alleys. Together, tracking data intentionally and using it to proactively prioritize service response can help reduce crime and make our communities feel more valued.*

*The performance of our City agencies is already tracked, but not at the neighborhood level. As Mayor, I will look at relevant metrics, including requests for service and crimes reported, compare that data over time, and present this in a public meeting in that neighborhood with members of my cabinet. This will allow residents, business owners, and other stakeholders to see what progress is being made to reduce crime and improve city services in their communities. This will give residents the opportunity to have a say in how their community is being served and provide feedback on what services need to be increased, improved, or abandoned.*

*2. I will conduct a full operational and financial audit so that my administration and the general public can have a full accounting of the assets and liabilities of City government. This will examine what property - buildings, office space, yards, etc. - the City owns and uses to identify potential redundancies and efficiency.*

*3. I will provide a dedicated funding source to the Fair Election Fund. Baltimore City government and its elected officials must be held accountable to the people they serve, but too often special interests, developers, and agents of the status quo believe they can buy influence over politicians and policy. We have seen very recently that some candidates in this race are bringing in tens of thousands of dollars from special interests and powerful media families. We must get money out of politics. As Council President I have been proud to partner with Councilman Kristerfer Burnett on the Fair Election Fund, which will provide a means to provide public financing to candidates for local office. But we need to identify a funding source.*

*Because we know this Administration is unlikely to do so, as Mayor I will provide the necessary funding to create a robust public financing system. This is how we can give a fair shot to candidates who aren't the choice of big money and help more people pursue a career in public service. By providing a mechanism for public financing, we can make elected officials more accountable to the people they serve.*

- 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?

*In April 2019, concerns about the Board of Estimates being prone to self-dealing and corruption were illuminated when it was revealed that former Mayor Pugh did not recuse herself from a vote on a \$48 million contract between the City and Kaiser Permanente, who had purchased children's books from the former Mayor. Baltimoreans want responsible changes to ensure that their government will not continue to be outdated or allow questionable practices to flourish. This summer during my nine community town halls, we heard from residents who clearly did not believe the City Solicitor or DPW Director should be deciding how their tax dollars were being spent. Yet, they were very clear that they want to hold their elected officials accountable.*

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*Changing the makeup of the Board of Estimates is one way to increase transparency in how taxpayer dollars are spent. Most cities do not use a Board of Estimates to approve city contracts. The Board of Estimates approves over half a billion dollars in city government contracts for goods and services every year. A body that determines how such a significant amount of taxpayer dollars are being spent has to be rooted in pure democracy. Today, that is not the case. The public has entrusted us to do the work of cleaning up city government so that we have a governmental structure that is less prone to corruption, more efficient, and more supportive of our local communities, Reducing the Board of Estimates to the three elected members, all with equal weight to approve or reject City contracts involving taxpayer dollars, is one way we can do that.*

- Do you think that the Baltimore City Charter should require a Chief Administrative Officer? Please explain your answer.

*Yes. In April 2019, I introduced Bill 19-0382: Charter Amendment - City Administrator, which would establish the position of City Administrator as the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) in Baltimore. By separating the implementation of City policy from overly political considerations, a CAO would improve performance in City agencies, ensure accurate information is available about City services, and increase government responsiveness to resident's needs.*

*In many jurisdictions, the roles of the Mayor and chief administrator are separate. Mayors are executives who focus on the challenges facing the city, while administrators play a politically-neutral role responsible for maintaining efficient city operations. Cities like D.C., Atlanta, GA, Charlotte, NC, and San Francisco, CA all have both an executive and an administrator.*

- How would you structure your Administration (ie, CAO, Deputy Mayors, Chief of Staff, etc.) to provide the most efficient delivery of City services?

*In order to professionalize and streamline the administration of city government, the day-to-day operations of city government will be run by a Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). Deputy Mayors, who will report to the CAO, will each have a portfolio of Departments and Agencies to oversee. My Chief of Staff will serve as a senior advisor and will also oversee the operations of Government Relations and the Office of Neighborhoods.*

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 is your plan to meet the increased obligation of Baltimore City? Please be specific in identifying areas or agencies that will see reduced appropriations as well as revenues that may be increased.

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*I commit to raising the City's contribution to Baltimore City Public Schools. We have never had a Mayor who considered the school system their responsibility and made it a priority. In August, in the first piece of my Legislative Agenda, I introduced a resolution demanding that the City's Department of Finance present to the City Council a proactive plan to increase local funding for our public schools for the Kirwan Commission's recommendations. We must be ready to capitalize on this once-in-a-generation opportunity for our City's youth.*

*Baltimore City Public Schools have been underfunded by nearly \$290 million over the past 10 years. The State of Maryland must do more, but so must the City. We know the Kirwan Commission will make recommendations to the General Assembly that includes over \$300 million in investments to support education. The City will have to increase its contribution to our schools and we must ensure we are prepared to meet that responsibility. This is not an option. Thus, every dollar we can reprioritize to education is important.*

*As Mayor, I will increase the City's contribution to public schools to right these historical wrongs so that our City's children get the education and resources they deserve. As Mayor, I plan to assemble a fiscal accountability task force. The task force will be charged with making recommendations on how to redirect funds to increase the City's support to schools as well as change the city procurement system - of which more than \$300 million a year is spent on professional services. This task force will be responsible for analyzing all city spending, including contract spending, through the following lenses: worker rights and benefits, contract compliance, equity, efficiency, small business support, and minority- and women-owned businesses. I commit to implementing the recommendations from this task force.*

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

*Unemployment in Baltimore is too high. We will never be the thriving city we can be when so many of our residents struggle to access family-sustaining opportunity or are shut out of the economy due to a criminal record. As Mayor, I would commit to more funding for workforce training and adult education programs, especially for residents who are hard to employ due to a criminal record. In order to properly prepare Baltimore's workforce jobs in high-demand industries, our city has to do a better job of coordinating with workforce trainers, labor unions, major employers, and our agencies.*

*Throughout my term, I will regularly convene these stakeholders to share information and better coordinate to maximize impact. The needs of our employers and our workforce must be better aligned with the workforce and adult education programs out there. I will commit to establishing and executing upon a strong vision for workforce development that unites our service providers, employers, and residents around a common mission.*

*Workforce development should start prior to release for people returning home from prison. We know that most people who have been incarcerated in Maryland state prisons return home to Baltimore City after serving time. If we know who will be returning home from prison and when, we can be more intentional about how we support them so they don't end up back in prison or unable to make ends meet. As a city, we must also hire more residents with criminal records. Providing opportunity is the best way to support a person's return back into society and a powerful way to reduce recidivism.*

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*As Mayor, I will direct the Mayor's Office of Employment Development to help returning citizens find a job and access the services they need to reintegrate successfully into society. This Office can partner with the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, Parole and Probation, labor unions, and workforce development organizations to provide job training & career readiness programs, treatment for addiction, and family strengthening services. We will target those living in Baltimore's most violent neighborhoods in advance of their release.*

*Additionally, we as a City need to be making data-driven decisions when deciding how to invest our City resources in workforce development programs. In Charleston, SC, city government is using data from LinkedIn to drive their decision making by analyzing what jobs are forecasted to come to the city, and what skills their residents needs in order to fill these jobs. A key partner in this work is the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce. As Mayor, I look forward to partnering with GBC in a similar capacity to be able to lift up and invest in workforce development programs that meet the actual needs of our business partners.*

- What role should the City play in attracting and retaining top talent to fill in-demand jobs in high-growth industry sectors?

*As mayor, I am committed to fostering an environment First and foremost, the City needs to lead by example when attracting and retaining top talent. As mayor, I will implement an aggressive local and national recruiting strategy at undergraduate and graduate universities. We must as a city do better partnering with our local and national educational institutions to attract the best and brightest, in order to better provide more reliable core city services to our residents. I will also expand our Mayoral fellowship program in order to provide more internship opportunities to current students, in order to strengthen a pipeline attracting top talent to work in City government or other sectors in the City.*

*As I stated previously, we as a city need to get better at providing core services and improve shared mobility options in order to attract and retain private and non-profit sector top talent. Examples of this include: better provision of city services, improved roadways, and advocacy to increase funding in order to ensure frequent and reliable MARC service.*

*Finally, this effort to attract and recruit top talent will require an all hands on deck approach. We must be strategic in how we market our great city to newcomers. I look forward to working with my non-profit, foundation, and private sector partners to create a strategic, equitable, and actionable plan to attract new talent to this great city. I believe there are many opportunities to leverage the recruiting expertise of our private sector partners to implement a coordinated effort to attract and retain top talent in Baltimore.*

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

- What are three things you would do to improve transportation and mobility in the City?

*As mayor, I am committed to equitably improving transportation and mobility opportunities for all Baltimoreans. Almost half of all Baltimoreans of car driving age do not have exclusive access to a car; moreover car individual car ownership is costly, increases congestion on city streets, requires more public funds to repair over-burdened public infrastructure, and contributes to climate change.*

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*In my administration, my top three priorities to achieve this goal are:*

*Make transportation infrastructure upgrades through an equity framework, including the full, city-wide implementation of Complete Streets, legislation I proudly co-sponsored*

*Fully fund and implement the Separated Bike Lane Network and Greenway trail by prioritizing lanes on low stress streets using the Level of Traffic Stress Methodology, these lanes should accommodate both bicycles and scooters, among other modes of non-vehicle transportation options.*

*Adopt policies for Baltimore City employees that incentivize public transportation and ride-sharing options. These could include a parking cash out for employees offered a subsidized parking pass and the provision of free bus passes to all city employees.*

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

*As mayor, I am committed to increasing dedicated funding streams for pedestrians, bicycles, and scooters. It is completely unacceptable that as of Jan 31, 2019, BCDOT is only committed to building 6 lane miles of shared mobility infrastructure. There are many opportunities to leverage other agency, state, and federal dollars to increase our investment in this critical infrastructure. For example, the Department of Public Works' Stormwater Utility fund spending on turning impervious to permeable surfaces could be spent in conjunction with BCDOT roadway upgrades. This kind of investment will require intra-agency coordination and cooperation with our state and federal partners. I am committed to this collaboration in service of equitable increased investment in alternative methods of transportation for all Baltimoreans.*

*In 2017 local, state and federal sources were identified through the Separated Bike Lane Network. Given the changes in leadership, and current administration's lack of commitment to bike lanes, it's difficult to know what of these funding sources are still available. But as Mayor, I am committing to leveraging local funds to bring in as much state and federal dollars as possible to fully implement (name of plan). I am also committed to establishing a working group with BCDOT, the State Highway Administration, MD DOT, and the MD Transit Authority to improve shared mobility, and increase opportunities to leverage state and federal funds. By prioritizing seamless coordination to finish 77 identified separated bike lanes and the 34 mile Baltimore Greenway Trail, we can make Baltimore a more attractive city for new residents and businesses.*

- What is your position on the creation of a regional transit authority to oversee the transit network?

*I support the creation of a regional transit authority. We need a comprehensive, dependable, and safe public transportation system that allows people to reliably get to and from jobs across our city. The current structure is susceptible to politics, and it doesn't always represent the interests of those who depend on it the most and the unique needs of Baltimore City and our region. It also does not take City resident to the regions most in-demand job centers. This is a particularly acute problem, because approximately 30% of Baltimore City households do not have reliable access to an automobile, with much higher concentrations in historically redlined neighborhoods. Many of those centers lie outside the City, including BWI, Columbia, and Sparrows Point, to name just a few. As Mayor, I will work with*

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*the MTA, the state legislature, and the surrounding County Executives to pursue a regional transit authority that would allow us to multiply our resources and plan regionally to better serve our residents' transportation needs and make our City and region more competitive.*