



# GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

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

### **CANDIDATE: BERNARD C. "JACK" YOUNG (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?

*My goal is to reduce crime with a comprehensive approach. Investing in our youth, rebuilding communities, and increasing support for job training facilities are key to reducing crime in Baltimore.*

*The strategy uses a data driven approach that established new focused patrol areas and activity zones where the level of crime is highest. These micro-targeted areas and zones represent over a third of all gun related incidents have occurred since 2015.*

*It is critical that under our consent decree, we focus on recruitment and retention for BPD.*

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*I understand that this is a systemic, cross generational problem. Crime reduction involves more than law enforcement alone. My comprehensive violence reduction strategy is strengthened by city agencies working in close partnership with the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice and focuses on five key areas: Prevention, Intervention, Enforcement, Rehabilitation, and Re-Entry.*

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

*As Mayor, I continue to work with our State, and Federal partners to reduce crime with a comprehensive approach. I have partnered County Executive Olszewski, County Executive Pittman, and our surrounding jurisdictions to create a regional gun stat system, that can track the flow of firearms moving through Baltimore and our surrounding jurisdictions. I have worked with Governor Hogan, who has pledged additional money and resources from our state criminal justice agencies to help fight crime in Baltimore.*

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

*In July, I tasked Tisha Edwards, who serves as the Director of the Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success, with developing a comprehensive strategy to transition our young people from working at dangerous intersections to more sustainable opportunities for employment and mentorship.*

*The plan seeks to identify who these kids are and how they can be linked with city services.*

*It also aims to get those kids off the streets and back into school and into job training.*

*The plan is making strides but we need help from the business community to help fund the plan.*

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?

*Flourishing communities start with our small businesses, which are the backbone of our economy and hire local residents. Creating jobs and connecting people with jobs is the stepping stone to so many other improvements in our communities, whether that's reducing crime or keeping kids in schools.*

*We want to drive development into neighborhoods that haven't seen it. We are doing major development across the city, including mixed income and affordable unit developments.*

*I don't believe in tearing everything down, nor do I believe in standing in the way of community redevelopment. Development in our neighborhoods creates jobs and rebuilds our communities.*

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

*Lowering crime is the number one thing we can do to retain businesses and residents in our city. I am working every day to implement my crime plan and make Baltimore a safer city.*

*We also need to fully fund the Kirwan Commission's recommendations in order to invest in and improve our K-12 education, so that business owners and entrepreneurs do not feel the need to leave our city to give their children a quality education and so our children are ready to compete in the 21-st century job market.*

*As well, I continue to work with the business community to create public-private partnerships that will continue to advance Baltimore, leveraging our local institutions to invest in our citizens.*

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

*As Mayor, I am focused on a tax structure that best serves Baltimore, as well as delivering quality city services that make our residents feel like their tax dollars are working in the best way they can. It is imperative people feel like their tax dollars are being put to good use.*

*In cities across the country, we have seen voters approve increased taxes when they feel that the city services and public amenities that these taxes fund meet the level of service that citizens deserve. We must, rather than looking for the magic formula to lower property taxes, demand and put in place systems and leadership that ensure that Baltimore's city services are second to none, throughout the state and throughout our country.*

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

*From my time as City Council President, until now, real property tax for primary homeowners has gone down 20 cents. I am using various property tax credits to attract high-income residents to our city.*

*I extended the 10-year High Performance Market-Rate Rental Housing Tax Credit aimed at encouraging development of new or converted market-rate apartments in the City. The tax credit is based on the increase in the value of real property due to improvements that were made.*

*We now offer a personal property tax credit to grocery stores locating or making significant renovations within targeted areas in the City.*

*I am using the Neighborhood Impact Investment Fund and Affordable Housing Fund to develop to direct resources and investments to the areas of our city that haven't seen it in decades*

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?

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*I can't think of anyone better for this job than someone who's spent his whole life working to make our great City a home to clean and healthy communities with equitable neighborhood development.*

*I have a proven record of steady, progressive leadership and being a change agent to improve the lives of the people here.*

*That includes increasing water affordability, bringing new levels of transparency to government, making recreation centers open on weekends, and passing the first Children and Youth Fund to improve the lives of our kids.*

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

*I am dedicated to increasing transparency in government, which is a value that I have championed his entire career.*

*I was ahead of my time in my call for body cameras for our police department, and passed laws to make key city hearings televised— making our government more transparent so that people can see the officials making the decisions and hold them accountable.*

*As Mayor, I've ordered audits to our city agencies and the Children and Youth Fund, and signed legislation for new and tighter ethics rules.*

- 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?

*I believe in the current structure of the Board of Estimates and I will continue to advocate for more minority and woman owned contracts.*

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

*No, I do not see the value in taking away power from the Mayor in a time where we need a steady hand to move us in the right direction.*

*I am using all of my executive power to turn this city around.*

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

*My team, made up of seasoned and respected leaders from both the public and private sectors, works steadfast to provide quality government and tackle the significant issues or city is facing. My senior team consists of ...*

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*Kim Morton Chief of Staff*

*Sheryl Goldstein Deputy Chief of Staff Operations*

*Carolyn Mozell Deputy Chief of Staff Neighborhood & Economic Development*

*Tisha Edwards Executive Director Office of Children and Family Success*

*Sunny Schnitzer Deputy Chief of Staff Public Safety*

*Lester Davis Deputy Chief of Staff Government Relations & Communications*

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.

*I have already tasked all of my City Agencies to reduce their budgets by a minimum of 5% in the next 2 years to prepare to pay for Kirwan. I fully support the Kirwan recommendations and I'm working hard to fund it.*

*Our kids and teachers across Baltimore City and across Maryland deserve a world class education system, with arts, music, counselors, and everything they need to succeed. I am fully committed to meeting our local obligations and working with Baltimore City's Budget Leaders in the General Assembly to get this done.*

- 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?

*We need to broker more relationships between job training programs and employers.*

*We have to redirect how we give money to job training facilities responsible for connecting people with jobs. I am trying to foster relationships between facilities that offer job training and the companies that offer jobs. This relationship will allow facilities to offer a curriculum that prepares and gives people the skill set they will need to prepare them for jobs within these companies.*

*Job training and apprenticeship is vital. I am convinced that would help reduce crime overnight. People wouldn't be out on the streets because after work they would go home after leaving their jobs, eat, rest and prepare for the next workday.*

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*I support Project Labor Agreements as they ensure a highly qualified and skilled workforce, training and apprenticeship opportunities for residents, and a pathway to middle-class careers.*

**\*\*See additional information at the end of the document.**

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

*The City should maintain a constant dialogue with the business community, and employers both large and small, as it is the business community that often recognizes ways in which government can be its support and its greatest partner, first. I enjoy longstanding and honest relationships with many business and institutional leaders and will continue to do so through the next four years of my administration. I will always welcome the input and the feedback of the business community, and will work to ensure that its leaders always find an open door and an open ear when they talk to me and to my most senior staff members.*

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?

*I am actively seeing through the implementation of the Complete Streets Model.*

*I fulfilled the Bmore Bright program. Through this initiative, two-thirds of the city's streetlights have now been converted to energy efficient LEDs.*

*Adequate lighting is essential for residents to feel safe in their communities. Over 10,000 streetlights have been upgraded with LEDs, and now two-thirds of the city's 76,900 streetlights are equipped with LED technology. This initiative not only increases public safety in Baltimore but also our sustainability, as these new lights are energy-efficient and will reduce utility and maintenance costs for the city.*

*I Passed "Don't Block the Box" legislation and called on the Department of Transportation to ensure that the traffic lights are properly synchronized to less downtown traffic. We are currently working to enforce this plan.*

*Soon, I will announce Baltimore City as a Vision Zero City. This is an initiative to get pedestrian and traffic deaths down to zero, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all.*

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

*Yes, I am working to invest in transportation infrastructure.*

*I am overseeing the implementation of the Complete Streets model.*

*33% of Baltimore Residents lack access to a car. They rely on public transit, biking, walking, and ride sharing to move around the city.*

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

*I would consider the creation of a regional transit authority. I support anything that alleviates traffic and helps people commute to and from work in the best way possible. I was a strong supporter of the proposed red line, which could be run by a regional transit authority, similar to WMATA.*

### **ADDENDUM: RECEIVED 02/11/20**

***Candidate submitted a revision to question below.***

**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?**

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*Job training and apprenticeship is vital. I am convinced that would help reduce crime overnight. People wouldn't be out on the streets because after work they would go home after leaving their jobs, eat, rest and prepare for the next workday.*

*I support Project Labor Agreements where they are appropriate.*