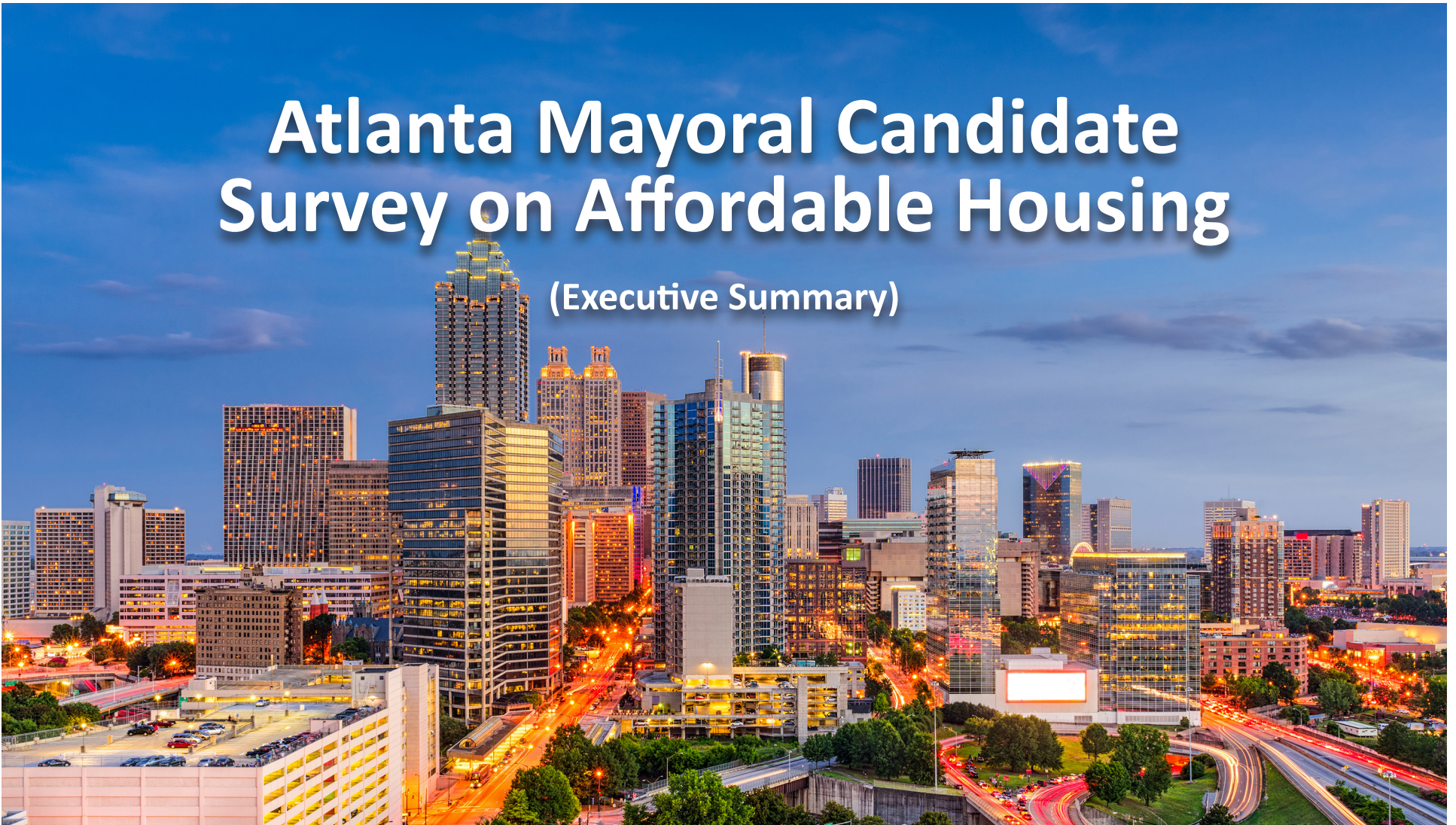


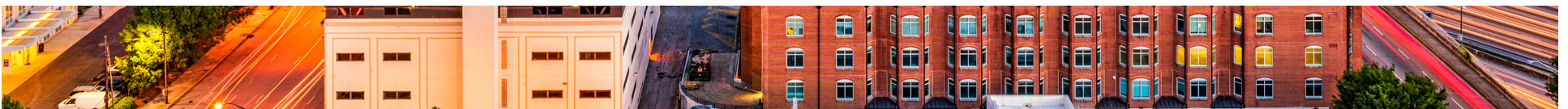
# Atlanta Mayoral Candidate Survey on Affordable Housing

(Executive Summary)



Atlanta Mayoral Candidate Survey  
conducted and presented by:

CITYFORALL





City for All is a broad-based coalition dedicated to ensuring an Atlanta with housing affordable for all. City for All will educate and mobilize citizens to press for legislation and resources which effectively address the urgent need for access to quality affordable homes. We will focus on gaining support for our platform from current elected officials and candidates in the 2017 City of Atlanta elections and beyond

[www.CityForAll.org](http://www.CityForAll.org)

The Transformation Alliance's member organizations and agencies are dedicated to ensuring that opportunities and benefits provided by investment in transit communities are made available to ALL residents – present and future. The TransFormation Alliance, a diverse group of organizations representing government agencies, business partners, metro Atlanta's transit agencies, and the nonprofit community.

[www.atltransformationalliance.org](http://www.atltransformationalliance.org)

## ABOUT THE SURVEY

The next mayor of Atlanta will inherit an increasingly untenable situation – housing affordability in the city. A rebounding housing market, booming luxury rental development, gentrifying neighborhoods, negative equity, and a vanishing supply of affordable housing all combine to paint a serious picture for low- and moderate-income families.

To understand what positions Atlanta mayoral candidates have on affordable housing issues, the City for All Housing Coalition and the TransFormation Alliance conducted a comprehensive survey. This document is a summary of the survey. For the complete survey, visit either of the websites listed above.

## HOUSING AS AN ISSUE OF IMPORTANCE

How do you rank these issues for importance to Atlanta's future, with 1 being the highest priority?	Candidate									
	Michael Sterling	Cathy Woolard	Cesar Mitchell	Kwanza Hall	Keisha Lance Bottoms	Peter Aman	John Eaves	Robert Ammanamanchi	Mary Norwood	Vincent Fort
Economic Development / Jobs	3	8	4	4	5		4	7	4	2
Education	2	5	6	2	3		5	6	5	3
Environment / Sustainability	9	6	9	6	7		6	4	8	5
Housing Affordability	6	4	1	5	2		2	3	6	1
Infrastructure	4	7	7	8	6		7	2	3	7
Property Tax Assessment	7	9	2	7	9		9	9	7	8
Public Safety	1	2	3	1	1		1	5	1	4
Transportation	8	3	5	3	4		3	1	2	9
Water	5	1	8	9	8		8	8	9	6
<b>Offer any issues you believe are important to Atlanta's future not listed above</b>										
Income inequality	✓									
Economic mobility	✓									
Cultivating Arts and Culture	✓			✓						
Ethics / Transparency			✓							
Urban Life				✓						
Conversation around race						✓				
LGBTQIA issue						✓				
Homelessness						✓				
Diversity									✓	
Inclusiveness						✓			✓	

**Please explain your views, overall, on the housing challenges faced by the City of Atlanta and what you believe the role of City government is in providing affordable housing. Do you have a specific plan, legislative initiatives or structural/operational changes to City government you will champion around affordable housing?**

The following are summary comments from multiple questions to candidates. To see the full survey, including complete comments from the candidates, visit:  
[www.cityforall.org](http://www.cityforall.org) or  
[www.atltransformationalliance.org](http://www.atltransformationalliance.org)

*Candidate responses are in random order.*

**Michael Sterling - [www.michaelforatlanta.com](http://www.michaelforatlanta.com)**

Affordable housing requires an attack from multiple angles, including a redefinition of what constitutes affordability in the City of Atlanta.... there is no silver bullet. I believe maintaining reasonable property tax levels plays a critical role in affordability.....we should have mandatory and voluntary inclusionary zoning as a part of our affordable housing plan..... we should look at innovative solutions such as micro housing and container homes. We should ask the State for a waiver on rent ceilings or alternatively ask the State to institute a cap on how much landlords can raise rent year over year.

**Cathy Woolard - [www.cathyforatlanta.com](http://www.cathyforatlanta.com)**

As Mayor, I would position Atlanta to become much more proactive rather than reactive in addressing (the) affordable housing crisis.... I would work to achieve defined and specific housing preservation and production targets, collaborating across the multiple government agencies.....to organize the key players (and) build dedicated funding sources... As Mayor, I will appoint a Commissioner of Housing and create and implement an Affordable Housing Action Plan..... ensure that publicly-owned assets like the Civic Center site and property along the Atlanta BeltLine are used to create new affordable housing....purchase boarded up apartments buildings and vacant tax delinquent houses for affordable housing, and explore a large scale implementation of the innovative community land trust model..... I would focus on three solution-oriented strategies: innovative use of public assets.... sustainable housing expansion policies.... (and) transit inclusive development.

**Ceasar Mitchell - [www.ceasarformayor.com](http://www.ceasarformayor.com)**

I believe that city government plays a pivotal role in providing affordable housing.....As Mayor I will require all new developers receiving city funding or subsidies to set aside at least 20% of its units as affordable.....bring light to blight by transforming over 5,000 of the city's most blighted and dilapidated vacant and abandoned homes and turn them into affordable housing options.....work to create Displacement Free Zones to place annual property tax caps in underserved communities that are susceptible to gentrification..... explore partnering with the city's stakeholders to create Community Land Trusts to develop permanent affordable housing and rent control programs to keep rates affordable for low and moderate income residents.....I will reward residents who have remained in their homes for over 10 years and experienced significant increase in property assessments over the previous year by offering Longtime Occupancy Credits to residents, especially our seniors.

**Kwanza Hall - [www.kwanzahall.com](http://www.kwanzahall.com)**

Affordable housing is the most challenging issue that Atlanta will need to solve over the next four years...it's a complex problem that requires a whole range of solutions.  
(As Mayor I will) .... deliver 10,000 new housing units at a variety of price points by utilizing Atlanta Housing Authority property or other appropriate land and buy(ing) down the cost of land around corridors needing redevelopment served by transit.....encourage more diversity in types of housing via micro-housing, duplexes and garden apartments that can be incorporated into existing neighborhoods and expansion of the Accessory Dwelling Unit legislation I passed in Spring of 2017.....restore and increase the capacity of Community Development Corporations across Atlanta to ensure that smaller, local investors can have a financial stake in the success of their communities.

**Keisha Lance Bottoms - [www.keishalancebottoms.com](http://www.keishalancebottoms.com)**

Atlanta is experiencing a tremendous amount of physical growth and redevelopment and that is causing housing prices to rise. I called upon the City to explore the creation of Displacement Free Zones to help keep Atlanta affordable for all. The first Displacement Free Zone has been designated in the Vine City/English Ave area through a public and private partnership.

**Please explain your views, overall, on the housing challenges faced by the City of Atlanta and what you believe the role of City government is in providing affordable housing. Do you have a specific plan, legislative initiatives or structural/operational changes to City government you will champion around affordable housing?**

*Candidate responses are in random order.*

**Peter Aman - [www.peteraman.com](http://www.peteraman.com)**

Housing is directly impacted by the investments we make elsewhere.....The government's role in all this is to be a leader and convener. We need the public, private, and civic sectors as well as the community all engaged....to find sustainable solutions.....We need the whole toolbox because the best course of action is a case-by-case proposition.....Different neighborhoods want different things. Different age groups want different things. .... I intend to use – where appropriate – site-specific negotiations, Community Development Corporations, Community Land Trusts. We need a comprehensive plan where there's a seat at the table for the Atlanta Beltline Partnership, the Atlanta Housing Authority, Invest Atlanta and other public partners, including the Fulton County Land Bank Authority, MARTA, and many more..... we can get everyone at the table, acting with intention, taking all variables into account, and better understanding the people and neighborhoods we're trying to help. That's my plan.

**John Eaves - [www.eavesforatlanta.com](http://www.eavesforatlanta.com)**

Atlanta's prosperity risks pricing-out many who want to own a home in the city.....We must work hard to attract investment but remain vigilant against forcing out the city's middle-class and underemployed citizens..... Affordable housing will be a top priority.....As mayor you can count on me to build a city in which firefighters, police officers, teachers and others can afford to live. We will redouble our effort to increase affordable housing through Invest Atlanta, which now only requires developers who use public money to set aside about 15 percent of their units as affordable housing.....I will insist that the Atlanta Beltline lives up to its promises to produce affordable housing.

**Rohit Ammanamanchi - [www.rohitatl.com](http://www.rohitatl.com)**

Unfortunately, our housing challenges are largely self-inflicted..... I believe the City should take charge in directing Invest Atlanta towards building multifamily houses and multiplexes where land is available, whether it is on land owned by AHA, or land trusts, or vacant lots..... I would rely less on application-based rent subsidies and take the approach of reducing the cost of construction, design, and land purchase to pass the cost savings onto tenants.

**Mary Norwood - [www.marynorwood.com](http://www.marynorwood.com)**

It takes vision and political will to have a desirable, inclusive community we want for our city...A Norwood administration would strive to implement...policies (that) protect senior homeowners....reduce, freeze or delay property taxes in impacted areas.....prohibit large-scale development in at-risk neighborhoods.....work with HUD, AHA and Invest Atlanta to create "stabilization vouchers" (rental assistance for long-time residents of low-income communities).....use city-owned property to create low-income housing....use judicial in-rem to recycle abandoned/blighted properties.....aggressively fund and build middle-income housing with the city as developer.....set attainable goals on the units of workforce housing built annually.....explore creation of a city department (to) specifically address issues of workforce housing and homelessness.

**Vincent Fort - [www.vincentfort.com](http://www.vincentfort.com)**

If the next Mayor does not act to ensure that we have effective programs that create a significant increase in affordable housing, Atlanta will become a city of the very wealthy and the very poor, with the middle and working classes pushed out... I believe gentrification and ensuring that we have a city that has a place for everyone of every socio-economic circumstance is critical and is the urgent issue facing us now..... I believe city government is the key to those programs, through increases in money and financial incentives to build affordable housing and policies such as inclusionary zoning to ensure that truly affordable units are built.....I believe the city needs a real - and legally enforceable - definition of affordability. Right now we have a definition that sets the income level too high.....We must combine that policy change with a large increase in the amount of money available to subsidize the construction of affordable units and well as the rehabbing of abandoned or declining housing into usable affordable units.

## INCOME LEVEL COMMITMENTS FOR CITY INVESTMENTS

Candidate	Annual household income level you'd commit to for:		
	Prioritizing the use of Housing Trust Fund revenue	Producing housing with Inclusionary Zoning	Prioritizing City funding for Housing Preservation
Sterling	\$40,500 (60% AMI) or less	\$40,500 (60% AMI) or less	\$40,500 (60% AMI) or less
Woolard	\$33,750 (50% AMI) or less	\$33,750 (50% AMI) or less	\$33,750 (50% AMI) or less
Mitchell	\$54,000 (80% AMI) or less	\$54,000 (80% AMI) or less	\$54,000 (80% AMI) or less
Hall	\$33,750 (50% AMI) or less	\$54,000 (80% AMI) or less	\$33,750 (50% AMI) or less
Lance Bottoms	No response	No response	No response
Aman	No response	No response	No response
Eaves	\$67,500 (100% AMI) or less	\$67,500 (100% AMI) or less	\$67,500 (100% AMI) or less
Ammanamanchi	\$40,500 (60% AMI) or less	\$67,500 (100% AMI) or less	\$54,000 (80% AMI) or less
Norwood	No response	No response	No response
Fort	\$24,300 (30% AMI) or less	\$24,300 (30% AMI) or less	\$24,300 (30% AMI) or less

## HOUSING TRUST FUND

Candidate	At what level of investment would you be willing to commit local public funds for capitalizing a Housing Trust Fund by year 2021?				
	\$50 M	\$150 M	\$250 M	\$350 M	Other
Sterling					✓ Depends on our ability to leverage funds from HUD HTF and the posture of our City budget
Woolard					✓ I believe the number is somewhere between \$50 million - \$150 million a year
Mitchell					✓ While I am totally committed to providing local public funds for a Housing Trust Fund, I am unable to provide a specific dollar amount at this time
Hall				✓	
Lance Bottoms					✓ Without in-depth discussions with our financial advisors, it would be irresponsible to commit to an amount at this time
Aman					✓ It would be premature to commit new public dollars when we have not yet optimized all of the current resources at our disposal through the public and private sectors.
Eaves					✓ Conduct complete review of city's finances then decide how much to allocate and how to pay for it.
Ammanamanchi			✓		
Norwood					✓ It is not possible at this point to say what amount is appropriate Housing Trust Fund level by 2021. As a candidate, I'm not in possession of a full analysis of the current financial situation of the City. Furthermore, I cannot predict what policy changes may be made at HUD by the new administration, nor can I project economic conditions four years out. With that understanding, Mary Norwood whole-heartedly supports the notion of establishing a dedicated revenue source for affordable housing in the city. If elected, I'll propose a detailed housing study be conducted. This study would extend to legal research on revenue sources prospectively available to capitalize a housing trust fund at the state and local level, economic forecasts of revenue, program and policy design, housing trust fund legislation drafting, and expert facilitation assistance in housing trust fund programmatic regulations through the legislative process at the state and local level.
Fort					✓ Rather than specify a specific number now, I will tell you how I will make the decision. I will push the Council to appropriate the funds needed to dramatically increase the amount of affordable housing available that is inclusive of the full spectrum of income levels we have in Atlanta. If that is \$350 million, I will push for that. If it is more, I will work to find the money to do so.

## INCLUSIONARY ZONING

Question	Candidate									
	Sterling	Woolard	Mitchell	Hall	Lance Bottoms	Aman	Eaves	Ammanamanchi	Norwood	Fort
Indicate your level of commitment for supporting a city-wide mandatory Inclusionary Zoning ordinance?										
1 – Not Committed					✓					
2				✓		✓		✓		
3										
4 – Totally Committed	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓
What incentives would you commit to approve as part of an Inclusionary Zoning ordinance? Select all that apply										
None										
Tax abatement		✓	✓				✓			✓
Density bonuses	✓	✓					✓	✓		✓
Reduced parking minimums	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓		✓
Lower permit fees		✓					✓			✓
Expedited permitting	✓	✓	✓				✓			✓
N/A, I'm not at all committed to IZ					✓					
Other (please specify) See Note 1 for Aman response						✓			✓	

Note 1: Every incentive listed where it makes sense, but not necessarily within a zoning ordinance.

## GENTRIFICATION

Level of commitment to adopting gentrification and displacement policies or actions, even if state legislative approval is required?:	Sterling	Woolard	Mitchell	Hall	Lance Bottoms	Aman	Eaves	Ammanamanchi	Norwood	Fort
Increased homestead exemptions										
1 – Not Committed										
2										
3	✓									
4 – Totally Committed		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓
Tax abatement / deferral										
1 – Not Committed										
2				✓						
3	✓					✓		✓		
4 – Totally Committed		✓	✓				✓			✓
City investment for rehab/maintenance loans for home and apartment owners										
1 – Not Committed										
2	✓							✓		
3				✓		✓				
4 – Totally Committed		✓	✓				✓			✓
Eviction prevention and reform										
1 – Not Committed										
2										
3	✓									
4 – Totally Committed		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓

## HOUSING PRESERVATION

At what level are you committed to:	Sterling	Woolard	Mitchell	Hall	Lance Bottoms	Aman	Eaves	Ammanamanchi	Norwood	Fort
Requiring public investment in affordable housing achieve long term (30 years or more) or permanent affordability?										
1 – Not Committed					✓					
2										
3						✓				
4 – Totally Committed	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Specific City investment in Community Land Trusts to achieve permanent affordability for subsidized housing units?										
1 – Not Committed										
2								✓		
3	✓								✓	
4 – Totally Committed		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓
Specific City investment to preserve existing affordable units with extended, expanded or new subsidies?										

## LIVING TRANSIT FUND

Living Transit Fund (LTF)	Sterling	Woolard	Mitchell	Hall	Lance Bottoms	Aman	Eaves	Ammanamanchi	Norwood	Fort
Are you aware of the LTF Proposal?										
Yes	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
No										
Level of commitment to support the LTF proposal (if it's determined to be a legal use of transit referendum revenue)?										
1 – Not Committed										
2				✓		✓				
3			✓							
4 – Totally Committed	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Rank the guiding principles listed below in order of importance to you for developing housing policy, with 1 being of highest importance	Candidate									
	Sterling	Woolard	Mitchell	Hall	Lance Bottoms	Aman	Eaves	Ammanamanchi	Norwood	Fort
Recognize the value of neighborhood diversity and equitable growth outcomes	7	6	9	8			3	7	3	3
Make mitigating displacement and preserving existing affordable housing immediate priorities	4	3	1	2			2	2	5	1 (tie)
Dedicate a source of local public revenue to sustain production and preservation	8	2	5	4			4	1	7	1 (tie)
Target investment to the greatest need and to achieve long-term or permanent affordability	5	5	2	5			5	4	4	4
Be transparent and accountable in planning and implementation	1	10	7	1			6	9	1	7
Restore lost homeownership and household wealth in underwater single-family neighborhoods	10	8	8	3			7	10	9	6
Strategically target investment to both revitalizing and stable communities	9	7	4	7			8	6	6	5
Link transit and housing affordability	3	1	6	10			9	3	8	8
Require green, energy efficient design and construction	6	9	10	9			10	8	10	9
Ensure City investment creates community benefit and protects against displacement of low-income homeowners and renters.	2	4	3	8			1	5	2	2