



## **Mayoral Candidate Survey 2021 Birmingham Municipal Election**

*Greater Birmingham Ministries invites you to complete this candidate survey. Your responses will inform our non-partisan 2021 Birmingham Municipal Election Guide, which will reach over 20,000 Birmingham residents. We will publish your full responses to this survey on our website, [gbm.org](http://gbm.org). Please return your completed candidate survey to [electionguide@gbm.org](mailto:electionguide@gbm.org) by July 2.*

**Name: Lashunda Scales**

**Campaign Email: [lashunda.scales@gmail.com](mailto:lashunda.scales@gmail.com)**

**Campaign Phone Number: 833.457.2021 / 833.4LS.2021**

**Campaign Address: 9709 Parkway East, Ste. C, Birmingham, AL 35215**

**Campaign Website: [www.ScalesBHM2021.com](http://www.ScalesBHM2021.com)**

**Campaign Social Media Pages:**

Youtube: ScalesBHM2021

Instagram: ScalesBHM2021

Facebook: ScalesforBHMMayor

**1. Please provide a 2-3 sentence biography.**

Lashunda Scales is a proud native, resident and product of the Birmingham City Schools system in Birmingham, Alabama. She is a former three-term Birmingham City Council Member for District 1, and currently serves as the President Pro-Tem of the Jefferson County Commission and Commissioner for District 1. She is best known for her public policy advocacy for underserved residents, building regional alliances to support local governments, advancing equal opportunities for small businesses and women in government.

**Additional background information:**

Lashunda Scales is an alumna of the prestigious Harvard Kennedy School of Government, Leadership Birmingham, Jefferson State Community College, attended Stillman College and also accepted to participate in Leadership Alabama XXXI Class. She is a 20-year veteran public relations and marketing professional. She and her husband Michael have been married for 30 years. They have two beautiful daughters and are faithful members of Faith Chapel Christian Center in Birmingham, AL.

2. Please name any endorsements you have received.

None received at the date of this submission.

3. What do you think the biggest challenges facing Birmingham will be in the next 5 years?

**After Lashunda Scales' first term in office based on current platform results:**

1. Long standing City infrastructure needs such as: roads, ditches, flooding, etc.
2. Gentrification
3. North Birmingham EPA
4. Birmingham Public Transportation
5. Recidivism

**How do you plan to address them?**

**Long standing City infrastructure needs such as: roads, ditches, flooding, etc.**

Work with federal and state officials to identify designated funding to address identified through City auditing

**Gentrification** – Public education regarding land ownership, taxes and maintenance

**North Birmingham EPA** – work closely with federal officials and community leaders to advance the City's role in assisting the residents of the North Birmingham community in address the environmental toxicity outlined in their "superfund" designation.

**Birmingham Public Transportation**

By work with BJCTA, Clas Tran and Birmingham Airport officials to provide effective, efficient and affordable services to all residents of Birmingham.

## **Birmingham City Schools system serving as an educational beacon for Jefferson County and the State of Alabama**

- Work With The Birmingham City Council To Improve The “City’s” Outlook On The Need To Partner With The School System To Increase Economic Development Opportunities While Reducing Crime Committed By Youthful Offenders
- Partner The City With The Birmingham City Schools System (School Board and Superintendent) To Advance Educational Standards, Resources and Accountability
- Partner With The Birmingham City Schools System and Local Colleges and Universities To Increase Workforce Development Opportunities
- Partner With The Birmingham City Schools System To Reduce The “School To Prison Pipeline” By Supporting Mentorship Programs Specifically Designed To Work With Parents and Youth

### **Recidivism**

I will work with law enforcement officials, the courts and non-profit agencies providing “second chance” program opportunities for a successful re-entry of released individuals who have served their sentences.

#### **4. How do you plan to invest in and support minority and women owned businesses in Birmingham?**

1. Re-evaluate the City’s Disparity Study to determine current feasibility to
2. To collaborate with the Jefferson County delegation to sponsor a local bill to amend the current law **mandating** minority and women owned business participation in all City of Birmingham projects.
3. To collaborate with public and private sector entities to properly fund and engage non-profit organizations with a strategic focus on empowering minority and women owned businesses such as: Urban Impact, Birmingham Urban League, Birmingham Business Alliance, etc.

#### **With Birmingham’s growing tech scene, how will you support equity in this field?**

Appoint a liaison between Birmingham City Schools, two-year colleges within the city limits of Birmingham and corporate tech companies to provide internships, mentorships, equipment, instruction and job opportunities.

5. **With so much redevelopment focused in downtown Birmingham, how will you support investment in neighborhoods?**

- Eliminate food deserts through active City recruitment
- Incentivize neighborhood economic growth and development
- Remove neighborhood blight
- Neighborhood revitalization that includes development of vacant lots
- Enhance neighborhood parks

**How do you propose assisting Birmingham residents that may experience displacement as a result of increasing housing costs?**

Collaborate with non-profit organization to address housing deficit issues.

6. **How will your plans and policies encourage or affect bringing services cut during the pandemic back to city residents in an equitable manner?**

As the President Pro-Tem of the Jefferson County Commission, I saw first-hand how neighboring cities governed themselves during the pandemic and Birmingham was the only city in the county and state to furlough city workers which in turn reduced city services. Therefore, I would actively seek to re-appropriate funding to fully reinstate jobs lost during the pandemic to restore city services back to its original state.

7. **How would you increase Birmingham residents' participation in decision making?**

Community engagement through constant public communication

Increased Partnership with the Citizens Advisory Board

Hosting Townhall Meetings, etc.

**Would you support a plan for participatory budgeting? Yes**

**How?**

**Through public participatory meetings, surveys and recommendations submitted for the City's review and consideration.**

8. **What policies or plans would you propose, support and/or implement to effectively utilize the \$5 million dollars in HUD funding awarded to Birmingham to combat homelessness?**

To collaborate with existing non-profit agencies that combats homelessness as a daily operation including those agencies supporting home ownership as a way to provide a better quality of living

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**9. What programs do you plan to add and/or remove from the Mayor's Office?**

Re-instate Community Policing and Revitalization (CPR)

Fully restore the Birmingham Beautification Commission

Police Oversight Review Board

All City departments will be carefully evaluated and audited before actions are conveyed.

**10. With Birmingham receiving \$147 million in federal aid through the CARES Act, how would you propose the city spend its CARES Act funds?**

Public infrastructure

Public service

**11. How do you plan to increase the city's revenue?**

Increased economic development opportunities, tourism, cultural arts enhancement, etc.

**12. How will you ensure that public transportation and other transit planning is accessible to all residents of Birmingham?**

By work with BJCTA, Clas Tran and Birmingham Airport officials to provide effective, efficient and affordable services to all residents of Birmingham.

**13. Birmingham consistently ranks as one of the top two cities in the nation with the highest energy burden (i. e. the percentage of income spent on electric bills). This burden disproportionately affects low-income and fixed-income Birmingham residents. Would you address the root causes of this issue and if so, how? Yes.**

The City of Birmingham would have representation with all public utility entities and the Public Service Commission to ensure citizens concerns are properly addressed including policies adversely impacting our citizenry.

**14. In 2020 Birmingham had the highest homicide rate in 25 years. So far 2021 is on trajectory for an even higher homicide rate. In your role as a mayor, how would you address crime and public safety?**

- Strengthen Community Policing:

Require Patrol Officers To Better Connect With Citizens Through Consistent Communication and Direct Interaction

- Require Precinct Captains/Lieutenants To Attend Community Meetings To Ensure Citizens Concerns Are Addressed In A Timely Manner. Therefore, Leaving Beat Officers To Respond To Citizens' Service Calls

- Establish A Proactive Police Department and Internal Affairs Division (IAD) That Is Fair and Equitable
- Strengthen the City's Partnership With Federal, State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies To Proactively Fight Crime
- Establish A Third Party Independent Community Relations Review Board (CRRB) To Oversee Statistical Data Reported To The General Public and Neighborhood Associations Related to Violent and Non-Violent Crimes By The Birmingham Police Department
- Collaborate With The Municipal Court Presiding Judge To Provide Appropriate Penalties For Non-Violent Offenders Based Upon The Crime Committed
- Re-habilitate Non-Violent Offenders Through Notable Workforce Development and Community Service Programs
- Develop A Regional Taskforce To Target Potential and Known Violent Crime Offenders
- Establish Communications with Neighboring City Officials and Law Enforcement Agencies To Identify Potential Violent Crime Offenders
- Collaborate With The County Criminal Courts and The District Attorney's Office To Provide Tougher Penalties For Violent Crime Offenders Through Law Enforcement Intelligence
- The Taskforce Will Host Community Meetings To Better Fight Crime

**15. What would your approach be to immigration enforcement in Birmingham? All**

City actions will be in accordance with state and federal laws.

**How would this approach affect Birmingham Police Department policy?**

City actions will be in accordance with state and federal laws.

**Would you and your administration continue to collaborate with ICE? YES**

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