



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. Please return your completed candidate survey to electionguide@gbm.org by July 2.

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Please provide a 2-3 sentence biography.

Cerissa A. Brown is a mother to an adult daughter. She is an Entrepreneur and has also worked in Call Center Customer Service for over 21 years. She is a passionate mental health advocate, peer counselor/empathy specialist and finds it an honor to fight for and assist our neighbors experiencing homelessness.

Please name any endorsements you have received.

Ms. Brown received a national endorsement from Future Generations PAC
<https://www.futuregenerations.earth/>
<https://mailchi.mp/futuregenerations/cerissabrownforbham>

What do you think the biggest challenges facing Birmingham will be in the next 5 years? How do you plan to address them?

I see the biggest challenges in Birmingham in the next five years being repairing the trust between us and the mayor's office, dealing with crime, gun violence, educating our youth for careers and trades companies are hiring for right now, food deserts, and Advocating for Congresswoman Cori Bush Green New Deal For 20 Cities creating A Green New Deal for Birmingham.

1. **Repairing trust between us and the Mayor's office.** A Brown administration represents servant leadership. I realize this will take time because a lot of trust has been broken by the current and previous mayors but this will not happen under my administration. When a resident calls or visits City Hall, we deserve to be listened to. When residents call or visit City Hall, we deserve someone who is truly listening. We deserve an ally in solving our problems. The city serves the people of Birmingham, and the citizens are our bosses, not the other way around. I am passionate about creating a culture of service because the only way we can rebuild trust in the city is to listen, care, and deliver.
2. **Educating our youth for careers and trades that companies are hiring for right now.** In Birmingham, our young people are so intelligent but have limited opportunities to advance post-high school education without going on to college. And finding a job should not be tougher than the job itself. An expensive college is not always the smartest path to a well-paying career. Under a Brown Administration, I will partner with the Birmingham School Board and Non-Profit Agencies to implement the following programs and school that will provide our students with a livable wage:
 - a. Create an accredited state-of-the-art technology school for students in grades 7-12. Beyond the core curriculum, students can pursue certification in areas such as IT Support, Data Analytics, Project Management, and UX Design. This will give our students the option to receive certification upon graduation. That way, our students can go right to work after graduation if they choose and make a livable wage or they can go on to college with credits already received. I would work with our colleges to make sure we are obtaining the proper accreditation needed so our students can graduate from college earlier if they choose to go this route.
 - b. Bring training for trade jobs that need workers now. I am an Entrepreneur with a Certificate in Women's Entrepreneurship from Cornell University, and I have a personal relationship with Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE), and I am also one of their Entrepreneur Expert Judges that judges at their Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge quarter-finals and finals around the country. I have been working to have the NFTE program taught inside our Birmingham School System.

3. Food Deserts. It is outrageous that we have to talk about “food deserts” as if nature made these in the middle of our city. Lack of grocery stores is a product of poor planning by the city. To eliminate this problem that has been going on since Ms. Brown was a child she will:

- a. Champion for empowering and training interested residents to open their own small grocery stores, so that the city has a network of locally-owned stores. This will stimulate Birmingham's economy, create business owners, create jobs, and reduce blight by using one of our many empty buildings in the city.
- b. I will also partner with all of our neighborhood associations so that all 99 neighborhoods can maintain community gardens with free fruits and vegetables for our neighborhoods.

4. Advocate for Congresswoman Cori Bush Green New Deal For 20 Cities.

A Brown Administration will advocate so that Birmingham will be one of the 20 cities to receive part of the 1 Trillion Dollar Funding. Funding would go toward environmental justice projects that align with a Green New Deal For Birmingham. The bill would fund efforts to improve clean drinking water infrastructure, remediate lead paint and mold, provide air quality monitors, prevent floods, and more. Per Bush “This whole thing is about saving lives. And then there are labor provisions in this bill to make sure that the workers are well paid and well treated for work. We have to build a system around making sure we take care of workers. The urgency of this climate crisis and environmental racism demands that we equip our cities and our local governments with this funding. Half of the money in the bill would go toward investing in “front-line communities and climate mitigation,” which Bush explained would help communities that are disproportionately impacted by climate change.

5. Crime and Gun Violence- Answer below

How do you plan to invest in and support minority and women owned businesses in Birmingham? With Birmingham’s growing tech scene, how will you support equity in this field?

As a Black woman entrepreneur, I have personally encountered discrimination in this area which is why I chose to obtain a Certificate in Women’s Entrepreneurship from Cornell University to learn how to navigate the business world as a woman. I will address this issue by:

- a. Creating a Birmingham Women's Business Development Centers. This center will educate and assist minority women (BIPOC) and women-owned businesses in receiving access to capital and other financial resources. Access to capital remains the largest barrier for all female entrepreneurs, founders, and women-owned businesses.
- b. The Birmingham Women's Business Development Centers will also assist in training women for jobs in Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics

(STEM). Efforts to start businesses in this field are very difficult for women entrepreneurs due to capital and training. A Brown Administration will be dedicated to encouraging and championing Birmingham women to start and grow their business in STEM because this is a field with such high growth potential.

- c. Because of my partnership in the works with Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE). I will be able to give out grants due to their partnership with Microsoft.
- d. I will also partner with the Birmingham City Council to make sure money is allotted in the City Budget for Women Entrepreneurs, Founders, and Women Business owners.
- e. A Brown Administration will make sure Birmingham can use public and private investments in smart infrastructures to advance equity in tech. Not only to improve efficiency but also to connect residents to opportunity, target investments in our disconnected or disinvested neighborhoods, and apply revenue generated from efficiency gains to equity-focused initiatives.
- f. The most direct way Birmingham can use tech smart infrastructure investments to improve equity is to connect our marginalized residents and disinvested neighborhoods to information, jobs, and services. Expanding access to broadband and providing free public Wi-Fi are good starting points: both actions can help close the digital divide. Broadband is the essential infrastructure for accessing economic opportunities on the internet and an ever-widening range of public services are delivered through the web. However, expanding broadband access alone may be insufficient to close the digital divide. Recognizing this, Ms. Brown will work to have embedded broadband expansion efforts within digital equity plans aimed at ensuring all residents in our 99 neighborhoods have the information technology capacity needed for civic participation, employment, lifelong learning, and access to essential services.
- g. With all the tech jobs coming to Birmingham A Brown Administration would work to make Birmingham become the country's most connected smart city with an emphasis on equity and inclusion. Cerissa A. Brown will create several elements of smart infrastructure (broadband access, public transportation, and smart streetlights) to achieve a more expansive vision of tech equity.

With so much redevelopment focused in downtown Birmingham, how will you support investment in neighborhoods? How do you propose assisting Birmingham residents that may experience displacement as a result of increasing housing costs?

1. To address the many challenges, Birmingham faces, it will be necessary for Ms. Brown to work with the Birmingham City Council, Neighborhood Associations, and leaders across sectors and agencies to come to identify key challenges affecting all 99 neighborhoods, establish shared outcomes to address those challenges and create a joint plan of action.
2. While the challenges facing Birmingham often plague specific neighborhoods, solutions to the challenges can come from our

neighboring cities. Communities operate within a broader political and economic context that is regional, making it critical that Ms. Brown engage leaders throughout our bordering cities to connect Birmingham residents with more opportunities.

3. Race is tied to class and power in gentrification. Most of the wealthy and well-paid in Birmingham are white while those being displaced in our city are black, we typically have less income to bid for housing and are more often renters at greater risk of eviction. White people can hold on to their claims to the city because they also hold political power. There are ways, however, to revitalize neighborhoods without also gentrifying them. One is to use a positive development model that builds a new vision of community health and sustainability that benefits all residents. Community organizing that brings different groups to the same table to identify a shared interest and common struggle is key to ensuring development that empowers entire communities.
4. Ms. Brown will partner with neighborhood associations and identify the types of housing, services, and infrastructure that should exist in our 99 neighborhoods. This process will value longtime residents' visions of neighborhood change and give the power of decision-making to community residents. A healthy community acknowledges this and supports the importance of racial equity, community, and culture.
5. Cerissa A. Brown will advocate for rent-control policies which will offer protection from sudden rent increases, establish maintenance standards, provide the right to a lease renewal, provide the framework for organizing and litigation, and set limits on security deposits. These policies directly affect neighborhood affordability by preventing rent from skyrocketing, enabling Birmingham residents to stay in their apartments or houses for the long term. Rent control will set a cap on how much landlords can charge for the rent.
6. Community benefits agreements (CBAs) are very effective. Under a Brown Administration, I will create an Active Community-Based Coalition that will stay involved during the development process to hold the developers accountable. This coalition will ensure any CBAs include fair benefits that are reflective of the 99 neighborhoods' wishes. CBAs give us a voice in shaping projects and the legal authority to enforce developers' promises.
7. Tenant option to purchase (TOP) is a tool for residents facing eviction because the property owner intends to sell the property, demolish it, or convert to another use. I will partner with the Birmingham City Council to pass a TOP policy to require that any housing unit undergoing such changes is offered to residents first before being sold, demolished, or re-rented on the private market. The benefits of TOP policies are that they create legal rights for individuals and families faced with displacement, they can ensure housing stability for existing tenants by giving them an

option to return to their original homes after being relocated, and they can increase living standards that benefit the existing tenants.

8. Rents rise when there is insufficient housing for all who need it. Vacant properties, of course, provide no housing. Some real estate investors buy buildings and let them sit empty – a phenomenon called “speculation” - often in areas at risk of gentrification where land can be relatively cheap. Real estate investors buy the property and allow it to sit empty because that costs less than managing the building and making sure it’s up to local codes. When the right development opportunity arises, they sell the property or demolish it to make way for something new. Cerissa A. Brown will fight against this continuing in Birmingham.

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

1. I will partner with the Birmingham City Council so that we can use the American Rescue Plan Funding (ARP) to the best of our ability. These funds expire at the end of 2026. A Brown Administration will not be retroactive on using these funds we will be proactive. This will give Birmingham a chance to invest in future growth and prosperity, the impacts of which will extend beyond near-term expenditure needs. I will put earn while you learn programs in place that can immediately help businesses and workers while also influencing our long-term productive potential.
2. Birmingham residents and businesses are hurting. Businesses need capital to reopen doors, and people need outreach and skills development to match them to available jobs. Providing immediate help with ARP Funding is necessary for long-term recovery here in Birmingham.
3. Many black and women-owned small businesses in Birmingham did not access loans through the federal government’s Paycheck Protection Program Loans (PPP) due to lack of awareness, lack of connectivity, and outright discrimination. Cerissa A. Brown Acknowledges this inequality. ARP provides funding for “Community Navigators” to ensure equitable access to capital and technical assistance. This approach can work, but requires organizational coalitions that have legitimacy and reach in a diverse range of our communities. A Brown Administration will work to build an organizational coalition to do this.
4. A Brown Administration will create a food tech hub that harnesses the city’s many food-related assets into a business accelerator with shared production and storage infrastructure, a startup fund to support diverse entrepreneurs, and a workforce development center to prepare people to attain and advance in a career. Parts of ARP run through the Economic Development Administration (EDA) and the Department of Agriculture. They both have programs that can support such initiatives. Ms. Brown will partner with the Birmingham City Council to figure out how its allocation can be used to complement this work.
5. Now that funding is secure, it’s time to act. A Brown Administration will create a local coalition that can stabilize our 99 neighborhoods they will strategize together to assist

Cerissa A. Brown and the Birmingham City Council invest in the future prosperity of our city and this coalition will organize itself to enable an inclusive recovery from COVID-19.

How would you increase Birmingham residents' participation in decision making? Would you support a plan for participatory budgeting? How?

I am a huge advocate for participatory budgeting. I am also a servant leader that truly believes the citizens of Birmingham are the true CEOs of the city and Ms. Brown works for you. Participatory Budgeting will give us the true power to make real decisions about how Birmingham's money is spent. When we have a say so in how the money is being spent it keeps people who don't have Birmingham resident's best interests at heart from being dishonest. I will get Birmingham residents involved through town halls, social media, city council meetings, neighborhood association meetings, the press (tv and print), word of mouth, and any other creative way I can make Birmingham residents aware that they for the first time have the opportunity to identify, discuss, and prioritize public spending projects.

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?

1. Many of our neighbors experiencing homelessness are outside by choice. They do not like feeling cooped up in shelters. Cerissa A. Brown will partner with the Birmingham City Council to pass a budget that will allow funds to create outdoor facilities around the City of Birmingham. These facilities will be outside and will offer residents shelter, cots, food, electricity, Wi-Fi, job training, and mental health and wellness checks. They will also help provide a path to permanent housing.
2. I will partner with our Shelters and Birmingham Grassroots organizations that have already built a relationship with our neighbors experiencing homelessness.
3. I will make sure that our neighbors experiencing homelessness have access to the same mental health programs offered to everyone else.
4. All job training programs that a Brown Administration creates will also be open and available to our neighbors experiencing homelessness. There will be absolutely no red tape for them to participate.
5. A Brown Administration will create a center that will educate our neighbors experiencing homelessness on how to get State IDs, Birth Certificates, Social Security Cards, restore voter rights, and other things needed in everyday life. So they can have everything they need when they are at the point that they are ready to get permanent housing and a career.

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

1. I will remove the Birmingham Promise from the Mayor's Office.
2. I will place all micro-transit under the BJTCA.

3. I will revamp the LGBTQ+ Affairs Department. Many residents that are members of the LGBTQ+ community are displeased with this department especially the black LGBTQ+ community. Ms. Brown will appoint an LGBTQ+ Advancement Director who will focus on stopping discrimination in business, give our LGBTQ+ youth a safe place to feel listened to. And any other ideas, activities, or initiatives that the LGBTQ+ Advancement Director feels are necessary for the success of this department.
4. I propose turning one of our empty schools into the Birmingham Career Center. By day focused on prepping and training our Birmingham City School students for the job market, in the evenings the Career Center will be open to all residents regardless of background. The Career Center will be open to Birmingham residents to take vocational night classes and “earn while you learn”.
5. I will start the Keep Birmingham Beautiful program. I will establish and propose a master plan to build more trails and greenways for recreation and transportation paired with complete streets resolutions. As a street is repaired we will make a complete street by including sidewalks and bike lanes that are also wheelchair accessible. This is active transportation which gives people the option to walk, bike, and wheel. A Brown Administration will add incentives for biking and public transit, address air pollution in our 99 neighborhoods. We will also encourage residents to look into transportation options that do not burn fossil fuels and the city will be doing the same.
6. Start the “Feed Birmingham” initiative that will consist of a task force dedicated to addressing this issue of food deserts.
7. Re-establish the Youth City Council program. There are many things we can learn from our youth. And this opportunity will possibly create future political leaders.
8. Introduce the “I Am Project” which will provide menstrual products in schools, Birmingham City Jails, and homeless shelters. Menstrual products are a health necessity for roughly half the population, yet many cannot afford to pay for these products that they so need. It is beyond time that menstrual products be provided to those who need them.
9. Established the Mayor’s office of Marginalized People. This will provide direct lines to Ms. Brown by appointing staff in charge of engaging, advancing, and hearing from these marginalized communities. The following marginalized communities will fall under this department. Our neighbors experiencing homelessness, the LGBTQ+ community, Seniors, Women, and Black People.
 - a. The Director of Senior advancement will hold regular coffee and tea hours with seniors, and advocate for them as their liaison to the Mayor and City Council.
 - b. The Director of Women’s advancement will work with leaders in business to ensure proper representation in Birmingham business leadership
 - c. Black People- Even though Birmingham is over 70% black, the Director of Black Advancement will increase help in stopping the destigmatizing black people.

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

Cares Act Funding will expire at the end of this year. Depending on when I get the honor of being sworn into office will determine if any money is left by the current administration and how it will be used. But right now Cerissa A. Brown is more focused on using American Rescue Plan Funding (ARP) in the ways mentioned above.

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

1. A Brown Administration will invest in creating retail districts throughout the city and making them more walkable and bikeable which helps businesses and restaurants fill empty storefronts and increases sales.
2. Pursue lowering costs by supporting compact development in already-developed places. Savings come from reduced capital costs for infrastructure and reduced costs to provide municipal services.
3. Ms. Brown will work with the Birmingham City Council to create impact fees on new development for roads, parks, public safety facilities, and drainage facilities that reflect the costs to meet user needs in the service area in which a project is located.
4. All private development produces property tax revenue, a Brown Administration would advocate for all else being equal, compact, mixed-use development in established town city centers produces more per acre, meaning that our 32 communities can maximize the revenue generated while minimizing the amount of land consumed.
5. Cerissa A. Brown will partner with the Birmingham City Council to prioritize major capital projects using a return-on-investment analysis that considers infrastructure costs, projected revenues, and the ability to attract private development.
6. A Brown Administration will encourage walkable, compact, mixed-use development around bus station areas and along transit corridors through our zoning code, land use plan, and site plan approval processes. This strategy of concentrating infill and redevelopment around transit stations will allow us to keep the character of surrounding neighborhoods while generating sufficient revenues to provide high-quality services.
7. Ms. Brown will create connected street networks that make the delivery of emergency services and road maintenance more efficient which will lower the per capita costs.
8. Cerissa A. Brown will Structure fees and service charges to better reflect the actual cost of service delivery while avoiding disproportionate impacts on disadvantaged households.

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

People controlling the government don't want to help minority cities including Birmingham because it's over 70% black. With the lack of funding, all the transit system can do is cut routes. And no one wants to do that. Our city would grow if we had a reliable system. Alabama is one of 3 states that the Transit System doesn't contribute to. Not having enough money puts a huge burden on all Alabama's cities making the transit

system more expensive. Unfortunately, the City of Birmingham is still putting the same amount of money into the Max Transit that they were putting into it 10-12 years ago. The current administration and the Birmingham City Council recently just reduced the amount allotted to MAX Transit in the new 2021 Budget. Birmingham needs to give more monetary commitment to MAX Transit and so does the State of Alabama.

1. Our Transit System was one of only 15 that got the Bus Rapid Transit Funding (BRT). Mayor Woodfin's administration played with it because they didn't know what to do with it. BRT expires in 2022 and the city still is not taking advantage of BRT. It was allotted \$0 in the new budget. The current administration should have had BRT for us and in preparation for the World Games. Under a Brown Administration, the following would happen:
 - a. I would fight to make sure we keep BRT and partner with Max Transit to learn how to properly use BRT even though we are running out of time. This would significantly change transit for selected routes to a 15 min wait for some and 30 mins wait for others.
 - a. On-Demand Transit such as VIA and VEO bike and scooters is not City Hall's forte and the current administration running it separate from Birmingham Jefferson County Transit Authority (BJCTA) is prohibiting them from receiving additional federal funding. A Brown Administration would place all On-Demand Micro transit such and VIA and VEO bikes and scooters, and any future Micro transit under the BJCTA so that they can receive federal funding for it. BJCTA receiving federal funding will give us a more effective transit system and help the City of Birmingham.
 - b. I've been riding VIA since June to understand exactly how it works. I quickly found out there were many places VIA does not go in the city of Birmingham. I will put Micro Transit such as Via in areas throughout the city that the BJTCA no longer goes to and in areas that do not usually have a lot of passengers. With Via running under the city it's defeating the purpose of having a decent transit system.
 - c. Mayor Woodfin will not listen to Mr. Theodore Smith the Chairman of the Max Transit City Board when he tries to explain how having Micro Transit ran by the city is hurting the Transit System. Cerissa A. Brown's slogan is "You WILL be heard" and I will always be open to listening and partnering with the Max Transit City Board for the betterment of our city's transit.
 - d. I will make sure that Birmingham residents understand that Max Transit can not make decisions on their own. Residents tend to take the majority of their complaints dealing with lack of routes or the long waits directly to Max Transit. A Brown Administration will make it known that this is handled by the mayor's office and make Birmingham residents aware that for change they need to contact the mayor's office, their City Councilors, and show up at Birmingham City Council meetings and voice their concerns. Residents are not aware it's the mayor's fault and not the Transit System's fault that the Transit System has had to cut routes or run

severely behind and this is causing our Transit System to constantly get bad survey scores which they don't deserve because in actuality it is the current administration's fault.

- e. All Transit systems have a lot of pull in Washington DC. The last in-person (American Public Transit Association) APTA's 2019 TRANSform Conference was in New York. Birmingham attendees toured Grand Central Station and were given a behind scenes tour to parts people like you and I don't see. It has things like the now-defunct Grand Central's Track 61 which once served as a direct subterranean route from Grand Central to the Waldorf Astoria Hotel and was ridden by President Theodore Roosevelt, restaurants, and it overlooks a huge tennis court. These are things you just wouldn't know were in a transit system. Grand Central Station also rents office space to companies and people such as Apple and Michael Jordan. Apple signed a 10-year contract to rent space for \$800,000 annually. Ms. Brown would work hard to create a similar opportunity for our transit system and this is perfect timing with all the tech companies coming to Birmingham.
- f. A Brown Administration would support Transit Oriented Development (ORD) which would allow the Birmingham Transit System to have housing and rental spaces to bring money back into the City of Birmingham. ORD invests in projects that places affordable housing and vital community services close to accessible transportation. This helps low-income people to reduce the cost of commuting and have access to retail and other services close to home. For example, if Birmingham gives 6 million in the city's budget towards ORD. ORD would match it bringing that to a total of 12 million towards Transit Oriented Development.

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?

1. I would address this by advocating for the City of Birmingham against Alabama Power.
2. Advocate to Create a Green New Deal for Birmingham
3. Put energy efficiency retrofit money into low-income communities and fixed-income Birmingham Residents.
4. Advocate for the petition filed to Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) that was filed in April stating Alabama Public Service Commission may be violating federal energy law by allowing Alabama Power to charge a fee to customers with solar panels. If passed it will give residents options and save us tons of money on our electricity bills.

5. A Brown Administration will find ways to develop clean energy. Clean energy creates jobs for Birmingham residents, strengthens Birmingham's economy, and help us control our energy future

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

Mayor Woodfin and Chief Patrick Smith's approach to public safety is not working — for children, for families, and particularly for Birmingham which is a predominately Black community that has been devastated by mental health crises, substance use, health crises, and criminalization. We must dismantle our public safety system's instinct to criminalize and replace it with an instinct to provide care. The safety of our 99 neighborhoods is dependent on our collective ability to create holistic, community-based centers of care and harm reduction. A Brown Administration will do this by:

1. Advocating for The People's Response Act that was introduced by Congresswoman Cori Bush because it is an important first step towards a world where all people in all neighborhoods feel safe. We can no longer afford to protect the status quo.
2. Creating a City of Birmingham Office of Faith-Based & Community Initiatives. This department will implement approaches for all this senseless gun violence in Birmingham and also approach community safety that doesn't center around policing or incarceration.
3. Publicly track progress toward goals of lowering general violence, murder rate, unsolved murder rate, and getting drugs off the streets, and making it available publicly in the effort to show transparency.
4. Creating a City Ordinance requiring stricter gun laws specifically surrounding guns without a permit.
5. I will work with the chief to establish mandatory yearly psychological evaluation for all Birmingham Law Enforcement to make sure law enforcement judgment isn't impaired due to the high stress of the job. I will also introduce legislation written by Mr. Jude Washington in law enforcement in regards to law enforcement and psychiatric evaluation.
6. Ms. Brown will create an external Citizens Review Board that works closely with Internal Affairs to hold Law Enforcement accountable. These individuals will not be appointed by a Brown Administration or by the Chief of Police. They will be elected by Birmingham residents.
7. A Brown Administration will create a task force of Crisis Cops who are specially trained to deal with mental illness. These police officers will divert people away from jail and into mental health treatment and follow-up with them once discharged from medical care.
8. Treat addiction not as a crime, but as a disease. Addiction is not a criminal justice issue, it is a public health crisis. We should not treat those arrested for drug use as common criminals. Instead of facing jail time, we should help them with recovery and rehabilitation.

9. Advocate bringing back the Good Neighbor Next Door Program in all 99 neighborhoods. This will help build trust and personal relationships between law enforcement and the residents of Birmingham.

What would your approach be to immigration enforcement in Birmingham? How would this approach affect Birmingham Police Department policy? Would you and your administration continue to collaborate with ICE?

A Brown Administration stands for being inclusive and offering city services to everyone, without discrimination. Birmingham has an immigrant population within our community and Ms. Brown will make sure undocumented immigrants are welcome and safe in Birmingham. Cerissa A. Brown is committed to serving and protecting everyone in Birmingham. FBI crime data shows that welcoming policies increase public safety by allowing local law enforcement to focus on keeping neighborhoods safe and encouraging immigrant communities to cooperate with law enforcement. I will partner with the Birmingham City Council to create ordinances that protect the rights of immigrants, and grants all residents access to city services, regardless of immigration status. We will create laws, ordinances, regulations, resolutions, policies, or other practices that obstruct immigration enforcement and shield criminals from ICE. Either by refusing to or prohibiting agencies from complying with ICE detainers, imposing unreasonable conditions on detainer acceptance, denying ICE access to interview incarcerated aliens, or otherwise impeding communication or information exchanges between their personnel and federal immigration officers. A detainer is a primary tool used by ICE to gain custody of criminal aliens for deportation. It is a notice to another law enforcement agency that ICE intends to assume custody of an alien and includes information on the alien's previous criminal history, immigration violations, and potential threat to public safety or security. This will not be tolerated under a Brown Administration.