



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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[@Chriswoodsformayor](#) on
[Facebook](#)
[Instagram](#)
[Twitter](#)
[YouTube](#)

1. Please provide a 2-3 sentence biography.

My father Bishop Calvin Woods, President of the SCLC and uncle Reverend Abraham Woods were noted civil right fighters and opposed Bull Connors segregated laws. I was born and raised in Birmingham Alabama. Graduated from Parker High School and Auburn University. I have been married to my lovely wife Cassandra Woods for 38 years and President of C.W. Woods Construction for 32 years. I graduated from Auburn University and was a member and four lettermen of the Auburn Tigers Football Team. I was president of Fellowship of Christian

Athletes (FCA) during my collegiate career. We are also a member and recent president of Gideons International Jefferson East Camp.

2. Please name any endorsements you have received.

Federal Judge U. W. Clemon,
Dr. James Andrews, Orthopedic Surgeon
Bishop Calvin Woods. President SCLC
Bishop Peter Wren, Senior Bishop of Church of GOD in Christ
Judge Houston Brown
Bishop O. L. Meadows, Senior Bishop of Alabama First Jurisdiction
Mothers Who Want the Violence to Stop

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

The biggest challenges Birmingham will be facing in the next 5 years are Crime, Growing the City Middle Class, Education and preparing our citizens for Post COVID-19 jobs and opportunities within the tech field.

We will implement my 7-point crime plan to address crime. My Free Pre-school program will start our children being educated and prepared for success. We will expose them at a young age to technology and tailor a path forward for those that show an interest in the tech field.

4. 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?

In 1973, Mayor Maynard Jackson gave us the blueprint of how to implement a successful program and move the city forward. When he took office, Blacks were receiving 1% of the city contracts. He wanted 25% to be dedicated to minority firms. The people who were receiving 99% percent, the majority of the business felt receiving 75% and yielding 25% was unfair and would not support it. Therefore, Mayor Jackson shut down business and would not move forward with the airport. Maynard Jackson was bold, fearless, and courageous. As the City Construction Manager under Mayor Langford, I actively ensured many of the black architects, and contractors were given contracts. Today, in Birmingham, Black owned firms receive less than 2% of contracted business. Our community can only move forward

when all qualified businesses have a seat at the economic table. After being in business for 32 years with my company C. W. Woods Contracting, I fully understand and embrace inclusion and participation for qualified businesses. Qualified Businesses with Birmingham zip codes, where we will recycle our tax dollars, will be given maximum consideration for city contracts. Birmingham will be stronger when everyone has a seat at the economic table and can participate in the growth and success of our great city. We are weaker when we exclude and discriminate against anyone regardless of race, sex, or sexual orientation. Equality is strengthened when all have access to participation.

We have seen our city transform from a Steel Mill town, Banking Capitol, Medical Hub and now to a city that embraces the Tech field. As a businessman, I believe in having a detailed plan to address the future of Birmingham.

- 5. With so much redevelopment focused on 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?**

First, I will keep my promise to invest and improve the 99 neighborhoods.

I worked with former Mayor Larry Langford as the city construction program manager. There were projects Mayor Langford had planned for 5 Points West and the Western communities diverted to Up Town and Downtown.

Our communities decline because we fail to reinvest in them. We can improve our communities when we make an investment in the neighborhoods. As mayor, I would like to see Municipal Centers built as anchor tenants inside the community. With the municipal center we can attract grocery stores and remove some of the blight. The residents will see an investment being made in their neighborhood. As the city construction program manager, I worked alongside city employees. We have employees that can perform and do the work. Together, we will pave the roads, eliminate potholes and tear down dilapidated houses. We will also work to remove all Land Bank and Abandon Properties from the city books. We plan to allow Birmingham residence and

investors have these properties. Our motivation is to ensure blight is removed from our neighborhoods. The city is spending over Six Million Dollars (\$6,000,000.00) annually to upkeep these properties. Once the properties are in the hands of vested citizens and investors the city could generate over Thirty Million Dollars (\$30,000,000.00) in property taxes. The Woods Administration will lead and encourage us to incorporate Solar Power Systems that will greatly reduce power cost. We also feel it is overdue to Birmingham a Gigabit City with unlimited bandwidth. The World coming to Birmingham, Alabama this is an area that we feel is being overlooked. It is time for Birmingham to lead, to be proactive and get ahead of trends and no longer keep falling behind. Our leadership will make Birmingham the attractive city she once was.

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

The policies that terminated, furloughed, and laid off city employees and services should have never happened. The administration used COVID-19 as an excuse. Birmingham is the largest city in the state yet was the ONLY city to eliminate jobs and services! My first day in office, I would reinstate all affected employees and terminated or reduced services.

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

Transparency and public trust are essential. As mayor, I am a public servant and work for the people. I would have public hearings on the budget to inform the public what funds are available for city services. The public will assist in prioritizing projects and services. Additionally, before we commit the city finances to significant long-term projects, the taxpayers should have a voice in whether the project is what they want and how it would possibly eliminate other projects and services. The sharing of information should be made available to the public.

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?

The top 5 reasons people become homeless are losing their jobs, mental health, drugs, divorce, or evictions. The issues that impact and reduce

homelessness are rental and employment assistance, drug and alcohol counseling and mental health treatment.

Homelessness has been seen as a major issue, typically during bad weather (freezing temperatures or storms). However, homelessness is an issue we must acknowledge daily. Under the Woods administration, we would commit funds to employment assistance, and I would have a dedicated staff associate to working to assist and match citizens and employers for employment. We would assist those that would benefit from mental health treatment as well as drug and alcohol counseling. Access to these treatments and services will change the direction of their lives.

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

We are committed to a total review of all programs. The programs that are working or need tweaking, we will continue with the new administration. The programs that are ineffective or inefficient will be removed.

We will be a true servant of the people. Fridays, will be my day to visit the neighborhoods to allow me to interact with constituents, see in person what is being accomplished and the impact of initiatives. We are committed to having a liaison from the mayor's office linked to the neighborhoods to bridge the gap and resources assisting residents in finding employment that pays a livable wage. High skilled opportunities.

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

First, we must conduct a study to prioritize the immediate needs. These funds should be used to assist with Human Infrastructure. We have failed to properly invest in the city employees. Birmingham needs more investments in community programs that provide proactive services and training. We must dedicate resources to our neighborhoods where we have seen crime out of control. The potholes, road paving, storm drainage, dilapidated properties and unchecked violence are priorities.

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

To bring in new business and generate new revenue, we must change the FBI ranking, reality, and perception of crime within our city. This is the reason why

my crime plan must be implemented. First, we must start with our current employers and see what we can do to assist them in expanding their businesses.

When attracting new employers to our city the items employers consider are:

- 1) Safety. We must not be on the FBI top 10 list as the 2nd most deadly city.
- 2) Access to good jobs.
- 3) Culture, we will show employers how we can assist them in making a profit.
- 4) Work with startups to help them obtain access to capital.
- 5) Well maintained roads, bridges, and infrastructure. The potholes in the neighborhoods and sewer flooding must be corrected.
- 6) The education system must be improved to attract workers to the city.

Implementing our plan to get all the land bank and abandoned properties off the city's books and into the hands of citizens and investors would generate over Thirty Million Dollars (\$30,000,000.00) in new revenue. The city would save over Six Million Dollars (\$6,000,000.00) in maintenance and monthly services.

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

Within the city of Birmingham limits 50% of the residents are barely above or beneath poverty. Therefore, public transportation is essential for our residents. For decades, we have missed out on matching federal funds to improve our transit system and not making the investment. Increasing and having the appropriate transit system to serve the community is highly important to me and would be a priority.

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, we have a plan for creating jobs and building a more positive future for Birmingham. The plan addresses the future of the city. Listed below are 3 primary areas that I will focus on in creating a skilled labor force in Birmingham making it the "Magic City" once again.

My plan will focus on:

Investing in the children and people of the city in continuous technical learning in areas of clean renewable energy, combating the climate crisis, and high-speed internet for all residents of the city.

Reduce harmful emissions by modernizing the city's current public transportation system. This includes investing in clean energy use of city vehicles, buses, and other work vehicles.

Create, support, and/or enhance workforce development training and retraining programs to support the new infrastructure of the Solar/electrical grids, electrical vehicle (EV) charging systems, and high-speed internet, etc. Solar Power System will reduce energy cost and is another area that our city is lagging.

The development of these areas within the city will provide the growth needed for Birmingham to become a progressive city once again.

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?

Currently, the FBI ranks Birmingham as the 2nd most deadly city in America! Last year we saw a 25 year high for murders! Crime has paralyzed our citizens, neighborhoods, and city. For Birmingham to fight crime, my 7 Point crime plan must be implemented.

List the 7-point crime plan:

- 1) I will reach out to the Sheriff's office for a cohesive partnership and strategy. We are 150 to 200 officers short and need to partner with the Sheriff's office.
- 2) We will focus on deterrence policing against gun violence, drugs, human trafficking, and gangs.
- 3) Invest in Crime Stoppers and Neighborhood watch.
- 4) Education, starting with Free Pre-School
- 5) Invest in Community Engagement Programs, Social Programs, PAT Police Athletic Teams.
- 6) Remove Blighted Housing and replace with affordable community housing. Invest in the 99 neighborhoods!
- 7) Have a City Hall liaison to assist Birmingham residents with job training, opportunities, and employment.

For the past 2 decades Birmingham has consistently ranked in the FBI top 10 most deadly cities in America. We must have a plan to get off this list.

15. 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?

Birmingham has a crime problem, not an immigration problem. Under my leadership, the Birmingham police department's focus will be on gun violence, the increasing murder rate, human trafficking, illegal drugs, and violent crimes. My focus will be on making Birmingham a safe city. The Birmingham police department is significantly understaffed. We will not be utilizing Birmingham personnel to assist ICE. Our focus will be on violent crimes. This is a federal matter, and the city of Birmingham passed an ordinance prohibiting it is resourcing to collaborate with ICE in this Federal matter.