



William Park Freeman (R)

Page 1: Introduction and Questions

Q1 GTIB has demonstrated positive results for Georgia taxpayers and played a significant role in many CID transportation priorities. Provided that funds are available once the economy recovers following the COVID-19 pandemic's effects, would you commit to increase funding for this program from its most recent level of \$13 million up to at least \$25 million? **Yes**

Q2 It appears that COVID-19 will decrease sales tax income and could decrease the value of the property tax base resulting in decreased revenue for all state and county governments in 2021. How would you handle a 15% to 20% budget decrease in your first year in office?

Carefully prioritize to ensure decreased revenue is spent wisely on the most important projects and functions of the state government. Do not raise taxes. Maintain a balanced budget.

The provision of transit services in metro Atlanta has long been a topic of policy discussion. In 2018, the General Assembly created the ATL (Atlanta-Region Transit Link Authority) to coordinate transit planning in the region, working with transit operators like MARTA, CobbLinc, Gwinnett County Transit and others to create a more connected network of mobility options and enhance the customer experience. The ATL is also designed to coordinate transit funding, distributing federal formula funds and recommending transit projects for potential state investment. The ATL's first regional transit plan showed \$27 billion in transit investment is needed in the metro area for expansion projects as well as to maintain the infrastructure already existing. These expansion projects include new rail, bus rapid transit, local and express bus and micro-mobility options.

Q3 How important is solving Georgia's transportation issues on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being extremely important?
100

Q4 Should the primary funding source for transportation be a state or local decision? Please explain.

If federal/state funding sources are available. The state should lead the way in making those decisions. Otherwise, it should be left as a local decision. If the transportation project is regional then the state should have a role in oversight and coordination.

Q5 If additional funds are available for transportation in Georgia, how would you like to see those funds allocated?

Allocate to regional infrastructure assets that would most alleviate traffic congestion. Allocate funds to projects built as sole use right of way to maximize efficiency.

Q6 Do you prefer Bus Rapid Transit or rail of some kind (light rail or heavy rail)? Please explain.

Light rail is the most efficient option. It is cheaper and less intrusive than heavy rail. It is less costly to maintain and cleaner for the environment than Bus Rapid Transit and heavy rail. However, it will only work if the system is given sole right away to avoid traffic and maximize efficiency.

Q7 Should the state or local jurisdictions pay for upgrading traffic signal installations to improve traffic flow?

The state pays for it through the gas tax. Revenue from the gas tax is used to pay for traffic signals. It should be used for upgrades as well.

Q8 Should the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) spend additional funding on better roadway maintenance or vehicle capacity building?

Better roadway maintenance is important. Additional funding should be used to keep the roads in good condition.

Also, additional funding should be utilized for better mass transit options.

Vehicle capacity (widening highways etc.) construction should be utilized as a option when it is absolutely necessary.

Q9 Should the existing 1% ESPLOST funds be available for traffic improvements on local or state routes caused by school growth/expansion?

Yes!

Using revenue from property tax (school revenue) isn't a good option

DeKalb County is the only county in Georgia with a CEO functioning separately from its county commission. Georgia's other 158 counties have an elected commission chaired by a Chairman who is elected countywide. The other 158 counties have an easily understood single chain of command.

DeKalb essentially has two chains of command; one with the Executive Department under the CEO and another with the Commissioners. In past county administrations it has been confusing to get decisions when two chains of command are involved. Often, in the past, there was confusion about who had the final control over business-related decisions.

Q10 What is your opinion about legislating that DeKalb move to a commission chairman form of county management?

I absolutely support it! It should have happened years ago.

COMPLETE

Beverly R. Jones (D)

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Q2 It appears that COVID-19 will decrease sales tax income and could decrease the value of the property tax base resulting in decreased revenue for all state and county governments in 2021. How would you handle a 15% to 20% budget decrease in your first year in office?

In 2019 the state had a 14% budget decrease. My first year in office I would requisition funding from other areas to stabilize the budget.

In 2018, the General Assembly created the ATL (Atlanta-Region Transit Link Authority) to coordinate transit planning in the region, working with transit operators like MARTA, CobbLinc, Gwinnett County Transit and others to create a more connected network of mobility options and enhance the customer experience. The ATL is also designed to coordinate transit funding, distributing federal formula funds and recommending transit projects for potential state investment. The ATL's first regional transit plan showed \$27 billion in transit investment is needed in the metro area for expansion projects as well as to maintain the infrastructure already existing. These expansion projects include new rail, bus rapid transit, local and express bus and micro-mobility options.

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Q4 Should the primary funding source for transportation be a state or local decision? Please explain.

This should be a local because most transportation service do not impact all constituents.

Q5 If additional funds are available for transportation in Georgia, how would you like to see those funds allocated?

I would like to see the money allocated towards high speed development towards expanding the reach of public transportation.

Q6 Do you prefer Bus Rapid Transit or rail of some kind (light rail or heavy rail)? Please explain.

Rapid Transit expansion would service and reach out to more people and cities.

Q7 Should the state or local jurisdictions pay for upgrading traffic signal installations to improve traffic flow?

local jurisdiction should pay for the upgrades in their district.

Q8 Should the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) spend additional funding on better roadway maintenance or vehicle capacity building?

Yes, GDOT needs to work on better road infrastructure.

Q9 Should the existing 1% ESPLOST funds be available for traffic improvements on local or state routes caused by school growth/expansion?

Yes. Its essential to repair our roads, streets, and bridges.

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Q10 What is your opinion about legislating that DeKalb move to a commission chairman form of county management?

Whether Dekalb move to a commission chairman form of county management or executive department we must hold the power in command accountable for any and all balance of power and ethics.

COMPLETE

Kim Jackson (D)

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Yes,

Other (please specify):

I support continued roadway improvements across the District and all of Georgia. I also believe that we need to provide more significant funding to mass transportation and other alternative/cleaner forms of transportation.

Q2 It appears that COVID-19 will decrease sales tax income and could decrease the value of the property tax base resulting in decreased revenue for all state and county governments in 2021. How would you handle a 15% to 20% budget decrease in your first year in office?

Addressing the budget issues will demand that we prioritize certain areas over others. My priorities for the budget are to ensure that Georgia's most vulnerable citizens receive the services that they need. Specifically, I will prioritize the full funding for public school education and medicaid expansion. It is imperative that the Department of Labor is fully staffed and has the revenue necessary to fulfill the requests for unemployment payments that so many Georgians now desperately need.

In order to increase revenues, thus offsetting some of the Covid-19 damage, I will advocate for an increase in sales taxes on tobacco products, and insist that we begin taxing all vaping products in a similar manner. Georgia's tobacco tax is among the lowest in the nation. If we raise the tax to the nation's average, we will bring in millions of additional revenue.

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The ATL is also designed to coordinate transit funding, distributing federal formula funds and recommending transit projects for potential state investment. The ATL's first regional transit plan showed \$27 billion in transit investment is needed in the metro area for expansion projects as well as to maintain the infrastructure already existing. These expansion projects include new rail, bus rapid transit, local and express bus and micro-mobility options.

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Q4 Should the primary funding source for transportation be a state or local decision? Please explain.

The decision regarding funding sources needs to be made with both local and state input. When we address mass transit issues in the metro Atlanta area, ALL of Georgia will reap the rewards; therefore, state input is critical.

Q5 If additional funds are available for transportation in Georgia, how would you like to see those funds allocated?

As noted above, I would like to see us invest more dollars in mass transit, bike, trailways, and other cleaner/greener forms of transportation.

Q6 Do you prefer Bus Rapid Transit or rail of some kind (light rail or heavy rail)? Please explain.

I believe that an investment in rail will, in the longterm, result in more economic development opportunities in the District. Ultimately, we need a mix of a heavy and light rail. But prioritizing heavy rail is an important step in helping us attract more manufacturing opportunities, while also enabling us to move more workers to those jobs.

Q7 Should the state or local jurisdictions pay for upgrading traffic signal installations to improve traffic flow?

Local jurisdictions are best at understanding which traffic signals need adjustments. Therefore, local jurisdictions need to be involved in any changes that are made to traffic signals.

Q8 Should the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) spend additional funding on better roadway maintenance or vehicle capacity building?

It is imperative that GDOT help maintain our roadways. When roads are not maintained, driving can become dangerous at best, and lethal at worst. Road maintenance must be high priority for GDOT.

Q9 Should the existing 1% ESPLOST funds be available for traffic improvements on local or state routes caused by school growth/expansion?

If there are leftover ESPLOST funds that are not already dedicated to building improvements, HVAC upgrades, bus fleet management, etc., then I would be supportive of these funds being used for traffic improvements along school routes.

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Q10 What is your opinion about legislating that DeKalb move to a commission chairman form of county management?

Once elected, and after hearing from constituents across the district, I will then determine if the issue should be taken up during session.