

Coalition for a Better Memphis Candidate Questionnaire Memphis Mayor

- 1a. Please describe your background and your qualifications for this position. What experiences caused you to run for this office. What previous experience qualifies you more than your opponents to lead on Day 1?

Elected six times in City Government position, five times to City Council, and once to City Charter Commission. I don't believe other candidate in this race has the same amount of public service that I have had during the past eighteen years. My accomplishments during the last 45 days as Mayor Pro Tem can be seen on the City's web-site www.cityofmemphis.org. As mayor I am already doing what the other candidates are promising to do.

- 1b. What previous experience do you have running a business, managing employees or controlling a budget?

I have served as council chairman twice and as chairman of the City's Capital Improvement Budget Committee five times and the budget chairman once. I was also the manager at three departments in Corporate Communications at FedEx; the Air Operations Division, Central Support Services Division in Corporate Relations.

- 1c. Beginning with the most recent position, please list all public offices you have held. Please include positions on appointed boards or commissions.

Leadership Memphis, Good Will Boys Club, Memphis Fast Forward, Memphis in May Board, River Front Development Corporation, President of the LeMoyne Owen National Alumni Association, LeMoyne Owen Board of Trustees, Treasurer of the National Alumni Council of the United Negro College Fund, Vice President of National Association of Black Journalist, Chairman of Democratic Municipals Officials, Democratic National Committee and Regional Director of the National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials.

- 1d. If you have previously run for elected office but were not elected, please list those races below.

MEMPHIS MAYOR QUESTIONNAIRE 2009

NAME: MYRON LOWERY

Memphis City Council 1983, Memphis City Council 1987, and Shelby County Circuit Court Clerk 1995.

- 2a. What is your vision for the City – how would you use this office to achieve the vision?

I would like to see a more positive attitude from Memphians about our city. Too many citizens criticize what we do not have rather than looking at the wonderful quality of life we have here. I have traveled all over the world and I realize that every major city has the same challenges that we have here in Memphis. I would like to make our citizens here believe that they have the power to help produce change when they become involved in civic and community activities. As the CEO the Mayor is the cheerleader for the city, he sets the tone for future progress and serves as a catalyst for improved recommendations for the community's future growth and development.

- 2b. What are the three greatest issues facing the City of Memphis today?

Crime, we must continue the downward trend that we are currently producing.
Economic Development, we must produce higher paying jobs.
Education, we must improve the quality of education in Memphis.

- 2c. What issues do you believe will shape the City over the next few years?

We must develop programs to retain our talent in Memphis. Too many of our young people are leaving the area.

We must continue to develop programs to reduce property.

We must continue to develop programs to increase the skill level of our young people who are unemployed.

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3. How do you plan on insuring that there is diversity represented in the development of public policy, staffing and appointments, and city contracting?

I am currently doing this by receiving recommendations for board and commission from several civic organizations. My staffing includes a diverse group of Memphians. Our Contract Compliance Office ensures that the contractual process includes small businesses, local minority and women owned businesses.

4. What role should the City of Memphis government play in promoting the economic development for the community? What specific initiatives or actions would you promote and/or support regarding both large and small businesses?

The city should serve as a catalyst for promoting more public/ private partnerships. We need to leverage city dollars to help promote economic growth in our community.

A mentoring program pairing large business with small business could prove to be very successful.

5. How would you strengthen and support existing neighborhoods that are within the City of Memphis and what barriers to community redevelopment do you see in these areas? How do you propose to address the neighborhood blight in a proactive manner?

By strengthening our Center for Neighborhoods we could create stronger neighborhood organizations.

MEMPHIS MAYOR QUESTIONNAIRE 2009

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The only barriers I see is apathy among some citizens. People believe they can't do it so they don't try. We have to create a sense of personal responsibility that follows my motto of "if it is to be it's up to me."

By strengthening our Community Enhancement Division; I have appointed our senior code enforcement administrator Johnie McKay to be Deputy Director of our Community Enhancement Division. I participated in a cleanup initiative in South Memphis sounding the Mitchell Road community and will be participating in a cleanup drive sponsored by City Beautiful later this month.

6. Discuss the current administrative structure and do you have a vision for altering this structure? How would you strengthen a culture of accountability and outcome based on performance standards for Divisions of City Government as well as appointed positions?

We have more than 400 appointed positions in city government; I believe that number should be reduced.

Many departments in city government are not doing annual performance reviews for their employees. We must be consistent in enforcing performance standards.

7. Give us your thoughts on a metro form of government and/or consolidated services.

I believe in the long run a metro form of government will serve our community well until then I am looking at combining services. Currently, I am evaluating a proposal to merge the Memphis and Shelby County Fire Department.

I have also been in discussion with the County Trustees Office regarding allowing that office to collect taxes.

8. What is the City's responsibility to Memphis City Schools? How should the relationship between the City and Memphis City Schools be structured?

The city has had the responsibility to assist in funding long term this will shift to single source funding from Shelby County.

The Memphis City School board should continue to be in charge of the operation of Memphis City Schools.

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9. How can the Mayor effectively contribute to the reduction of the crime rate in the City of Memphis? What current strategies would you continue to support and what changes would you propose?

I believe more citizen need to be involved in our community to fight crime. As Mayor I have encouraged active participation in neighborhood watch groups and cyber watch. Too many citizens complain about crime yet they do not follow safety measure to prevent themselves from becoming victims of crime. They leave articles in their car and doors unlocked as well.

I will continue to support Operation Safe Community and Blue Crush.

10. State your position regarding residency restrictions for City workers, including police officers.

The City Council expanded the boundaries for police officer to 20 miles outside of Shelby County. That will continue until the end of the year in an effort to help us recruit new officers. We currently have more than 3000 applications for police officers on file and we are only able to process 300 new officers every year.

11. Are you familiar with the current budget and what would be your major budget priorities?

Yes

Our budget should always reflect serving the needs of the citizens in our community.

12. Would you be willing to submit to a background check and allow the results to be published?

Yes, that has been done in the past and I expect it to be done again in the future.

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