

The Biography of Mayor Shirley Franklin



In 2001 the people of Atlanta elected Shirley Franklin, a first time candidate for public office, to serve as the 58th Mayor of the City of Atlanta. She became the first female mayor of Atlanta and the first African American woman to serve as mayor of a major southern city.

Since her inauguration in 2002, Mayor Franklin has worked to build a "Best in Class" managed city by strengthening existing frameworks, implementing progressive changes and making the tough decisions necessary to improve Atlanta. She has returned accountability to city government and improved the quality of life for all Atlantans.

Mayor Franklin's accomplishments:

- Restored financial stability by making tough decisions that have resulted in five balanced budgets and have generated a healthy reserve.
- Implemented one of the strongest ethics reform programs in the nation and an Ethics Task Force.
- Laid the foundation for a \$3.2 billion overhaul of the city's aging water and sewer system.
- Convinced the 2004 General Assembly to allow Atlanta to place a municipal option sales tax before the voters that overwhelmingly passed and generated money for Clean Water Atlanta.
- Set into motion mediation that resolved legal issues that led to reactivating the building of the fifth runway at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. This portion of the \$6.3 billion expansion is on schedule and under budget.
- Established a commission of city leaders to study the problem of homelessness in the city and creating the "Blueprint to End Homelessness in Atlanta in 10 years." The flagship project, the 24/7 Gateway Center, designed to serve 500 people a day with needed personal and health services, opened in July 2005.
- Implemented the New Century Economic Development Plan outlining an economic vision through 2009 that includes Brand Atlanta, the Beltline, and transportation improvements.
- Created "Next Step...The Atlanta Promise", a program for every Atlanta Public Schools high school senior designed to engage students in planning for their future beyond high school, whether it is college, the workforce, technical school or the military. The 2005 program raised \$1.9 million, including \$1.1 in scholarships for 300 graduates.
- Administered the \$150 million Quality of Life Bond Program, which leveraged funds to add new sidewalks, beautify major arterials, enhanced both pedestrian and vehicle safety by improving traffic signals, provided for walkways, trails and amenities, as well as reconstruction and resurfacing damaged streets and bridges. Nearly 1,200 projects are underway or completed.
- Filled approximately 3,700 potholes

Other quality of life improvements include safety issues. The Atlanta Police Department (APD) received accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies and crime is down overall 30%. The murder rate is the lowest in 50 years. Atlanta Fire Rescue developed a best-in-class customer service program to assist residents..

Mayor Shirley Franklin has been featured in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, Fortune magazine, Ebony magazine, Black Enterprise and many other local and national publications. Governing magazine named her 2004 Public Official of the Year. In 2005, Time Magazine named her one of the top five mayors in the country; she is ranked among the top ten mayors in the world by the World Mayor internet organization and has been named one of "America's Best Leaders" by U.S. News and World Report and the Center for Public Leadership at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. In 2005, Esquire Magazine named her one of the best and brightest and American City and County Magazine named her Municipal Leader of the Year. Mayor Franklin is also a recipient of the 2005 John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award.

Mayor Franklin currently serves as a member of the Democratic National Committee and Treasurer of the Democratic Party of Georgia. She is the Georgia Municipal Associations' 2nd Vice President, Chair of the Travel and Tourism Taskforce and the Chair of the US Conference of Mayor's Women's Caucus. She is the Chair of Atlanta Development Authority, the Chair of the Brand Atlanta Campaign, the Chair of the Board of Trustees of CIFAL-Atlanta and a member of the National Conference of Black Mayor's Business Council. She is secretary of the Board of the Atlanta Regional Commission and serves as Chair of its Ethics Committee and Secretary of the Executive Committee.

Mayor Franklin earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from Howard University and was awarded her Masters of Arts degree in Sociology from the University of Pennsylvania. Mayor Franklin has received honorary degrees from Howard University and the Atlanta College of Art.

Franklin previously served as the Commissioner of Cultural Affairs for Mayor Maynard Jackson and was subsequently named Chief Administrative Officer and City Manager for Mayor Andrew Young. When Maynard Jackson was elected to his third term, Franklin remained as Executive Officer of Operations.

She also served as senior vice president for external relations for the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games and served as CEO of Shirley Clarke Franklin & Associates, a management and consulting firm for public and community affairs.

Mayor Franklin resides in southwest Atlanta and is a proud parent of three adult children, one daughter-in-law and two grandchildren.