



Life In Brief

Current Title: Mayor

Quick Summary

Fifth-generation Atlantan whose personal background and experience focuses on progressive justice reforms to shape Atlanta as a socially inclusive and business-friendly city

- Rose through ranks of Atlanta politics, becoming the only mayor in Atlantan history to have served in all three branches of government
- Prior to her mayoral position, Bottoms helped broker a \$30 million sale of Turner Field, sponsored legislation that closed the \$1.5 billion unfunded pension liability, and grew the city's reserves 20-fold to nearly \$150 million in five years
- Lifelong interest in criminal justice system and policy prompted her to reform the city's incarceration and cash bail policies
- Promotes her *One Atlanta* policy platform of addressing housing affordability initiatives, criminal justice reform, transportation connectivity and safety measures
- Deeply connected to the Atlanta community through politics, volunteering, and network

Approach and Motivations

Formative childhood experience witnessing her father's incarceration sparked an interest in criminal justice reform and public service; mobilizes network to achieve policy goals

- As an 8-year-old Bottoms witnessed a drug raid at her house which resulted in the arrest of her father; served as a catalyst for her legal education and criminal justice reform platform

- Prioritizes trust and transparency in leadership to set her campaign apart from former Mayor Reed; initiated Atlanta's Open Checkbook for residents to track city finances in light of Reed's City Hall bribery scandal
- Leverages her network to create diverse leadership teams in terms of race, experience, and industry

Policy Position and Areas of Focus

Manages city budget to realize Atlanta as an accommodating business hub by prioritizing criminal justice reform and infrastructure

Criminal Justice Reform: *Reducing rates of incarceration and recidivism*

- Eliminated the cash bail bond for low-level offenses in 2018 that disproportionately impacted underprivileged communities
- Launched a reentry program in 2018 to reduce recidivism by providing life skills and employment at the Department of Watershed Management upon completion
- Creating transition spaces for incarcerated individuals to access job training resources, social services, childcare, and housing

Transportation: *Developing an equitable transport network with a focus on workers' commutes to attract and secure new businesses*

- Established the Department of Transportation (DOT) to enhance connectivity and reduce commutes between neighborhoods, schools, city services, and new businesses
- Joined the Eastside and Westside Beltline Trails via a Southside trail to eradicate physical barriers between historically separate neighborhoods and improve transit flow



- Addressed pedestrian safety by organizing a \$5 million plan to redesign more than 20 miles of city corridors to improve non-driver safety measures and protect bike lanes

Housing: *Creating affordable homes*

- Goal of investing \$1 billion to create and preserve affordable housing opportunities
- Put forth the One Atlanta Housing Affordability Action Plan to create 20,000 affordable homes by 2026
- Plans to redevelop former housing projects into mixed income and age housing developments, integrating the city further

Core Communities

Bottoms possesses deep familial and neighborly connections to Atlanta, while maintaining a significant national reach

Atlanta’s African-American Women’s Groups: *Active in community organizing initiatives*

- Partnered with the Dogwood City Chapter of The Links Inc. to bring women professionals to local elementary schools for Career Day
- Involved in the Atlanta chapter of Jack and Jill of America, formed by African-American women enhancing their culture and identities
- Second African-American woman mayor to be elected in Atlanta
- Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Alumna

Fellow Mayors: *Holds leadership roles in the U.S. Conference of Mayors and collaborates with members from across the U.S.*

- Chair of Community Development and Housing Committee, moderating conversations on achieving affordable housing alongside mayors from Ohio, Indiana, and Arizona

- Facilitates discussions on conducting the census in diverse communities with mayors from Texas, Michigan, and Rhode Island
- Leader on COVID-19 hazard pay policies, modeled her stay-at-home order off of Mayor Breed (SF), and mimicked a roll out grant program from Mayor Carter (St. Paul)

Influential Atlantans: *Closely engages with the business and entertainment industry through personal network*

- Transition team dotted with CEOs and high-level executives of Fortune 500 companies, musicians, philanthropists; provides immediate insight into businesses’ needs and challenges
- Childhood friend of former Mayor Reed, who helped her become Head of AFCRA
- Endorsed by many of Atlanta’s rap artists, including: Migos, Jeezy, and 21 Savage

Relevant Financial Information

For the competitive 2018 election, Bottoms’ campaign raised about \$1.2 million in contributions

Biggest Corporate Donors (2017): *Bottoms received a notable amount of financial support from airport vendors*

- Master ConcessionAir (Miami, FL): \$23,525
- Hojeij Branded Foods (Atlanta, GA): \$40,900
- A-National Limousine (Atlanta, GA): \$27,000
- H.J. Russel (Atlanta, GA): \$10,100

Political Donations: *Bottoms has donated to state and federal candidates*

- Joe Biden, 2019: \$3,800
- Stacey Abrams, 2018: \$3,000
- Stacey Evans, 2018: \$2,600



- Hillary Clinton, 2015 & 2016: \$2,250
- James E Clyburn, 2019: \$2,000

Publications, Media and Speaking

Utilizes press releases, local news sources, and social media to communicate with the Atlantan public. Since COVID-19, Bottoms has been featured in numerous national news sources

Publications: *Infrequently pens opinion pieces*

- Favorite Subjects: Affordability, transportation, urban development, air pollution, and U.S. Immigration practices
- Preferred Outlets: *Huffington Post* and *Atlanta Journal Constitution*

Media: *Engages with national media outlets, prior to COVID-19, her social media presence was more playful*

- Preferred Outlets: *ABC News, MSNBC, CNN, Huffington Post, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Atlanta Magazine, Atlanta Business Chronical, Atlanta Tribune* and other local papers
- Has entered the national spotlight with her COVID-19 response
- Favorite Subjects: Affordable housing, transportation, criminal justice reform, mentorship, immigration and detention centers
- Social Media Habits: Very active on Instagram and Twitter, less active on Facebook

Speaking: *Speaks on city policy initiatives*

- Favorite Subjects: Inclusivity, urban development, criminal justice reform, and recently, COVID-19 policies and responses
- Preferred Audience: Atlantans, community groups, city council, and mayors

Family and Personal Background

A proud and deeply connected Atlantan whose family transformed her career

- One of five children to R&B singer Major Lance and Sylvia Robinson
- Parents subsequently divorced following father's arrest; mother returned to work, often relied on female neighbors to help the family
- Fifth generation Georgian who can trace her family history to a plantation near Crawfordville
- Met her husband, Derek Bottoms, at Georgia State University College of Law
- Has four adopted children

Awards and Honors

- 2020 Georgian of the Year, Georgia Trend Magazine nomination
- 2019 Distinguished Alumni Award, Florida A&M University
- 2019 National Community Service Award
- 2018 Atlanta Business Chronicle Power 100 nominee
- 2018 Ebony Power 100 Honoree
- *BET*her 2018 Women to Watch nominee

Criticisms and Controversies

Critics have alleged Bottoms of financial corruption, citing her mayoral campaign finances as an example

2018 Mayoral Election Finances

- State ethics commission is investigating the 2017 campaign contributions of Keisha Lance Bottoms and Mary Norwood, rival mayor candidate in the runoff election



Keisha Lance Bottoms

Mayor Of Atlanta

- Commission alleged that together, both candidates illegally received \$551,748 in over-the-limit donations
- Bottoms was accused of receiving and accepting \$382,773 over-the-limit donations
- Bottoms team hired a lawyer, Jeremy Berry, who was serving as Atlanta City Attorney; raising concerns about conflict of interest and misuse of campaign funds
- Subpoenas for bank records have been issued; case still pending