



THE VILLAGE REFORM DEMOCRATIC CLUB

Questions for 2021 Mayor Candidates Responses from Candidate: Maya Wiley

GENERAL

1. Why are you running for Mayor?

I'm running for Mayor because I am a change-making leader. We need to do more than just rebuild New York City; we need to reimagine it. I am committed to building a New York City where every New Yorker can afford to live, get a decent job, get a good education and have a decent quality of life while doing it. That is- with the dignity every New Yorker deserves. I will fight for New Yorkers of all races, all religions, all classes, all types; so that no matter who we are or how we see ourselves, we can find a home here. My vision is a New York that rises from the ashes of twin pandemics — coronavirus and systemic racism that denies investment to people of color. New York must rise together; rising above hate, rising from joblessness to dignity, rising from homelessness to hope, rising from an affordability crisis to communities that sustain all of us. This is within our reach, but it requires bold leadership that fearlessly confronts the realities New Yorkers face. Leadership that marshals all of the government's resources to make history, not deals; and that transcends the business-as-usual governmental tinkering to make truly transformational progress. New Yorkers cannot afford the politics of least resistance and deserve leadership that will beat a path to shared prosperity — to become one city, rising together, out of the ashes, and into a future we build and live together.

2. What experience do you have that has prepared you to become Mayor?

I possess a unique collection of qualifications for the job that I believe set me apart from my rivals and will allow me to be more effective at leading New York through this time of crisis. I am the candidate in this race who has worked as a change-maker outside and inside government, knows how it works, and has a track record of moving big ideas, removing barriers, and doing it in a way that listens, learns, partners, and performs. During my career I have been a leader in city government, non-profit advocacy, higher education and in spurring democratic change. As Counsel to the Mayor, I have delivered for New York City on civil and immigrant rights, women and minority owned business contracts, and universal broadband access. I created the first-ever broadband capital construction budget line in NYC history and found the revenue and got four separate agencies of government working together to get every unit in Queensbridge Houses free, government broadband, creating the first safety net service the city has ever had. I helped unblock a city government log jam to get the City's first sanctuary city law passed, got women and minority owned business contracting spend up from \$500 million to \$1.6 billion in one year and repeated that in year two. After leaving City Hall, I held police accountable as Chair of the Civilian Complaint Review Board and got the case of the police officer who killed Eric Garner over to the police department, finally beginning the process of getting him fired. I also worked to improve public education as a Co-Chair of the School Diversity Task Force, where in less than two years we met with over 800 New Yorkers and generated two reports with comprehensive recommendations for fair and equitable schools. Unlike my opponents, I am a nationally recognized racial justice and equity advocate with three decades of experience creating change by bringing people together to develop and implement ideas to dismantle structural racism. I am a veteran of both the ACLU and the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund and was the founder and president of the Center for Social Inclusion (now Race

Forward). I was also Senior Advisor on Race and Poverty at the Open Society Foundations, the largest funder of human rights work in the world. At the New School, I served as a University Professor and the Senior Vice President for Social Justice, founding the Digital Equity Laboratory on universal and inclusive broadband, building on what I was able to achieve before and in the Mayor's office.

3. What do you believe are the most important responsibilities of the Mayor?

The next Mayor must start by leading a recovery from COVID that benefits all New Yorkers, not just the few. We need to build a city where everyone can live with dignity. To do that we must invest in our city. We cannot employ austerity measures that tell hungry people to simply tighten their belts. That is why the centerpiece of my economic recovery plan is a Works Progress Administration-style infrastructure, stimulus and jobs program called New Deal New York. New Deal New York is a \$10 billion investment to provide a shot in the arm of our City's economy—putting residents back to work and investing in the future of our communities. As mayor I will address our revenue crisis in a way that both ensures that our trash is collected and ensures that other basic services we need to recover and to maintain our dignity are financed and delivered to every resident. At the same time, we must transform how government supports job creation, small businesses, ensures more safe and affordable housing, and reins in the NYPD, so that it protects and serves rather than surveils and abuses residents. It's not enough to just return to the New York that predated COVID, though we must rebuild. We must reimagine our city and use this crisis to face structural inequality, actual racism, and finally fix what has been broken for far too long for Black, Brown, LGBTQ, Indigenous, Immigrant, other marginalized communities and women of all races.

4. Would you seek to change the current Land Use system, including CEQR, the ULURP process and the use of current Mandatory Inclusionary Housing to create affordable housing?

Our current land use system is broken. Too often, communities are forced to choose between the promise of housing or jobs, or transportation, or healthcare opportunities. We must stop doing piecemeal neighborhood development. Too often, this leads to displacement of communities of color. Our zoning process is broken. In order to address the multitude of structural problems, we need to implement a two-pronged approach. First, we need long term comprehensive planning. We can no longer view projects through the lens of them being isolated developments. We need to continue to grow as a city, but we need a vision that is developed by communities as a whole. Currently, ULURP provides inadequate opportunity for substantive community input. I support the expansion of the ULURP process to include a racial impact study for all neighborhood rezonings, a process that has been led by community groups through Council Bill 1572A. I also support expanding the ULURP process' definition of "environmental impact" to include impact on housing, transportation, schools, and available healthcare services. I will improve CEQR by strengthening community engagement and intensifying its focus on environmental social justice. As Mayor I will build on the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing model by deepening affordability levels to make units accessible to low income and very low income New Yorkers. I will also work to expand it to cover more of New York City with a focus on neighborhoods that have the least affordable housing and highest rates of residential development.

EDUCATION

1. New York City's public school students are not academically competitive with other major industrialized nations in math and science (STEM). How do you plan to address this disparity?

In a global economy it is essential that the New York City public school system prepares its students to be able to compete against students from anywhere in the world. As Mayor I will work to transform rather than tinker by investing in innovation and equity that excites residents about public schools. We must tackle the structural inequality in STEM learning that cheats our female students, students of color, low income students, students with learning differences and those experiencing housing insecurity. And we

must provide universal broadband to allow all students and families to stay connected and thrive in this age of technology. I will increase the resources we devote to teaching math and science and develop new models for how to run effective individualized education programs. I will also make recruiting more STEM teachers a priority of the Department of Education. We must lower class sizes if we are going to increase education outcomes. I will focus on expanding access to communities that have been historically underserved and increase partnerships with STEM organizations and the city's universities and institutions of higher learning. We must consider how kids can virtually join classrooms for STEM courses that they are interested in and expand initiatives like STEM Matters, which offers public school students a variety of exciting, hands-on, experiential STEM programs.

2. How do you plan to implement high speed internet access to all school children throughout NYC?

With the commitment and focus of the government I know it is possible to make sure every New Yorker has access to high-speed internet. While I was at City Hall, I was asked to develop a plan to build free broadband across New York City. No city has ever successfully done this, and I was excited for the challenge. In my time at running the program, we established free broadband at Queensbridge Houses, developed plans to wire at least 1 NYCHA development in each borough, and earmark \$70m in capital dollars to enact that plan. When I left the administration, no one executed the plan and when COVID hit, Queensbridge Houses was the only NYCHA development in the City with free broadband. When I am Mayor, I will finish what I started to ensure that every student in New York City has broadband access. We must get our students access to free broadband and devices no matter where in this city they live. Building digital infrastructure has been left to the private sector under our national regulatory structure, with a few notable exceptions. I will expand the Queensbridge broadband model I created to other public housing developments, as the Mayor committed to but failed to execute after my departure from City Hall. But we must do more. I will leverage the city's public assets, like light poles and buildings, and partnerships with libraries and our school system to expand access. We must also utilize our franchising authority to create new partnerships to extend service, negotiate more low cost service and examine the feasibility of creating a city Broadband Authority that can more aggressively develop and leverage broadband expansion opportunities that close the digital divide and invests in public and low cost options.

3. Less than half of the budget for New York City's public schools reaches the classrooms, while more goes to administrative costs. If you believe this is a problem, how will you correct it?

It is essential that more of the resources of the New York City public school system are spent in the classroom. As Mayor, I will do a full audit of the DOE management structures and breakdown the silos and duplicative bureaucracy to ensure that maximum resources are going to our students and their virtual and physical classrooms. I commit to taking an honest look at how we allocate resources with an eye to reducing class sizes, nurturing the unique talents and gifts of low-income students, developing new models for how to run effective individualized education programs and strengthening the role of career exploration starting in middle school. I believe we also must reimagine what the classroom is through big ideas like high schools without walls, that would untether students from particular assignments to specific buildings to open up new opportunities for learning.

4. There are 50+ school districts in the five boroughs, with large staffs, performing largely the same administrative functions. How would you address this in your administration?

We must streamline our public school bureaucracy so more funding is spent in the classroom and less funding is spent on administrative functions. As Mayor I will do a full audit of the DOE management structures and address the redundancies and duplicative bureaucracy that have resulted from having over fifty different school districts to ensure that maximum resources are going to our students and their classrooms. We will explore possibilities for centralizing certain administrative functions to increase efficiency and enact reforms that will be effective. Shifting funding to lowering class sizes and making

sure that every student's unique educational needs are being met will be priorities of my Mayoral administration. We must consider all the ways we can expand our investments in nurturing the unique talents and gifts of all students with a special focus on students of color, low income students, students with learning differences and those experiencing housing insecurity.

5. Many larger city schools have been broken up into smaller schools, each with its own principal and staff, often in one building sharing a cafeteria, gym, library, auditorium, etc. Do you believe smaller schools can provide the kinds of services available in one larger school, such as sports, art and music, foreign languages, drama and theater, etc.?

While there are certainly benefits to smaller schools, I would not repeat the mistakes of the Bloomberg administration in closing large schools and randomly distributing struggling students from the new small schools to other large high schools. I am committed to finding opportunities created in this crisis to innovate how we structure and deliver education and that includes the physical spaces, class-sizes, which we must reduce, and educational opportunities to take courses in new and different ways because of our opportunities to innovate in an equitable way that creates a twenty second century schools system. As Mayor, I will focus on innovation, including pedagogy and curricula so that no matter the size of the school, all students are treated as exceptional and we set a high expectation in their achievement and invest in the whole child, including music, drama, and sports.

6. What are your feelings about the current state of racial equality for teachers? What, if anything, would you do differently from current policy and practice?

During the 2018-19 school year, about 80% of NYC's 200,000 public school teachers were white, 8% were Black, 7% were Hispanic, and 3% were Asian. These percentages clearly do not reflect the diversity of our city, and we know that teachers of color help close achievement gaps for students of color, while being highly rated by students of all races. This is a school integration issue, and it is something I worked on as part of the SDAG. As Mayor, I would create leadership development and accessible teacher training programs to develop a racially and ethnically representative teaching force and cultivate school leaders of color.

Specifically, I would increase efforts to draw diverse young people into the teaching profession by providing stipends while they study for certification, and covering the costs of certification exams. I would build on NYC partnerships with HBCUs, and target teachers of color through career fairs, webinars, newsletters, and social media. In addition, I would expand on the NYC Teaching Fellows program, and dramatically scale up the NYC Men Teach program, launched in 2015, which has raised the percentage of new hires that are men of color by 3%. Lastly, I would continue to support and invest in the Teach NYC Career Training Program, which has been the largest single source of minority teachers since it began

7. Would you expand specialized schools like Stuyvesant, Bronx Science, and Brooklyn Tech, to open more of these programs throughout the city?

I am committed to creating new educational programs and opportunities, including new schools that break the mold of the old models that do not work and that support the energy and engagement of our children. I do not believe the model of specialized high school, where admission is based solely on a single test that has insufficient validity for its intended use, is the best way to create a diverse, dynamic learning environment. We have been debating for decades how to create public schools that are excellent, equitable, and serve all of our kids. I would focus on creating innovative, diverse learning environments that are exciting and attractive to students and their parents, reducing class sizes and developing new models for how to run effective individualized education programs. As the chair of Mayor de Blasio's School Diversity Advisory Group, I led a process with 40+ community leaders to present a series of

proposals to tackle the structural inequalities and racial, economic, and other forms of segregation that exists in our school system. These proposals included ending discriminatory admissions criteria. As Mayor, I will start by focusing on getting our students their lost year of learning back, but in a way that transforms the system so that it is one that excites and invites all students in our city.

HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

1. What solutions do you propose for the increasing number of homeless people in our city?

Homelessness, at its core, is an eviction and affordability crisis. All New Yorkers are housing ready -- the question is whether we have housing they can afford and provide additional support for those who need them. I will take on these crisis with energy and enthusiasm because New York City needs a Mayor who is unafraid to lead.

We need to find ways to immediately house people. Approximately 4,000 people are sleeping on the streets on any given night. At the same time, around 100 hotels will likely go bankrupt due to the pandemic. As Mayor, I will explore ways for the city to acquire these properties to convert them into permanently supportive housing. I have spent time over the last few months with the men of the Lucerne and with homelessness and housing experts and know that with a housing first approach we can end street homelessness.

We must increase the City FHEPs subsidy from the current \$1200 per month and restructure it so that homeless New Yorkers can actually afford an apartment. Under the current system, less than 5% of voucher recipients are able to find an affordable apartment.

We must also look at community partnerships like those formed on the Upper West Side between Project Renewal, the residents of the residents of the Lucerne, Upper West Side Open Hearts Initiative and Goddard Riverside as a model for community support and integration of New Yorkers who are currently or formerly homeless. That partnership ensured onsite services and employment opportunities.

We must also ensure that people can stay in their homes. I support the expansion of right to counsel to provide free legal representation to tenants facing eviction. But in order to keep people in their homes and realize the humanitarian benefits and financial savings from doing so, we need to make a significant initial investment in direct rent relief.

In December, I introduced an Eviction Prevention Plan that begins by using the \$251M in Emergency Rental Assistance funding from the Federal Stimulus for the City. This will provide much-needed relief, but it does not come close to addressing the massive housing crisis that has been exacerbated by this pandemic. In the long term, the best defense against homelessness and displacement is ensuring that New York's housing stock is safe and truly affordable for all New Yorkers. We need to build on the success of the housing first model by moving homeless individuals to subsidized housing and then linking them to support services. We would save money by investing in permanent supportive housing and models such as supported SROS.

2. "Affordable housing" especially in Manhattan is becoming exceedingly rare. How would your administration address this?

- What is your opinion on adaptive reuse of commercial buildings to create affordable housing?
- What is your position on rezoning in historic districts?

If elected, my administration will fight for affordable housing in every borough on multiple fronts. First, we need rent subsidies to address the immediate eviction crisis facing our families while standing up with fellow advocates to fight in Albany for universal rent protections and to preserve affordable rentals. Next, we need to change the city's approach to land use and re-zonings in ways that create and maintain affordable housing, with a focus on deep and permanent affordability over simple unit production. All land use and housing plans should include a fair distribution of resources, prioritize the construction of affordable housing, and take into account community needs while correcting for historic disinvestment and displacement. We must rethink our planning processes and economic development programs to be based on key principles and include real community and stakeholder engagement, so people have a real say and control over the destiny of their neighborhoods, without abandoning fair share principles. Also, my platform will support homeownership strategies and innovations such as nonprofit development, ways to increase access to credit, and community land trusts. Additionally, communities should have the opportunity to acquire their own housing. This means exploring programs where distressed properties, including commercial buildings, are acquired by the City for use as permanently affordable housing to be managed by nonprofit affordable housing developers, investing in community land trusts, keeping housing built on public land permanently affordable, and exploring measures like TOPA/COPA at the city level to put housing in the hands of residents. I will work to implement creative solutions to expand our affordable housing stock by converting tax liens, buying up vacant properties left behind in the wake of COVID, and stimulating more non-profit housing development. I oppose up-zoning our city's historic districts. We can address our city's affordable housing needs without changing the character of our City's neighborhoods.

3. Landlords cannot currently evict tenants for non-payment of rent due to the COVID-19 pandemic and are still required to pay real estate taxes, sewer and water fees to the city. What are your thoughts on this?

I believe that it is essential that during this time of crisis we support our city's small landlords. I have proposed an ambitious rent and tax relief program for small landlords and non-profit landlords. This initiative will initially invest the \$251 million dollars of federal stimulus money in a direct rent relief program allowing qualifying landlords to receive relief directly for any back rent owed regardless of who their tenants are. Qualification for aid would be based on a number of factors including overall landlord portfolio size, overall financial health of the landlord's portfolio, and priority for aid would flow to those that have been most severely affected by the current crises, who need it the most. We would ease the burden for participation by determining qualification in the program based on existing filings and application processes to ensure small landlords are not unfairly eliminated from participation because they are unable to navigate a complex and bureaucratic application process. We would provide technical assistance for any additional application requirements by partnering with trusted and experienced neighborhood based organizations with translation capacity. While federal aid provides financial resources to landlords, it does not guarantee that tenants will not be evicted, so we would ensure that protections are enacted. The program would require that landlords who receive support comply with an eviction moratorium and would require non-harassment protections for tenants. My administration will also offer additional property tax deferment to small landlords in exchange for giving tenants the right to renew their lease with limited rent increases for five years.

4. Do you have specific plans to make NYCHA housing more habitable, efficient, and accountable to its tenants and the city? What is your position on NYCHA infill?

As part of my economic plan New Deal New York, I have earmarked \$2 billion dollars of future city funding to address NYCHA's capital needs. We will also fight for increased Federal and State investment in our public housing, on top of that \$2 billion. This investment would begin to address decades of underinvestment and would provide residents safe living conditions while also making vital climate resilience updates to a substantial portion of our city's housing stock. As Mayor, I will center NYCHA tenants in the decision making and policy process. Too often, NYCHA tenants have had decisions made for them without them. Instead, I would elevate the voice of local residents while fighting for increased federal funding. NYCHA must be considered as part of a holistic approach to housing. While NYCHA has its own specific needs based on federal oversight, it represents a significant chunk of our city's affordable housing stock and that must be recognized. The current model of siloing public housing from affordable housing strategies has been a failure. I would also shift the oversight of public housing and affordable housing strategy under one umbrella. Although I believe each project should be evaluated individually for its own merits I am as a rule, against NYCHA infill. We cannot solve our city's public housing funding crisis by selling out to private developers who intend to use NYCHA land to build market rate housing.

CRIME/NEW YORK POLICE DEPARTMENT

1. What are your thoughts on the current number of police officers on the street, and how would you address crime prevention going forward?

We need to put the Public back in Public Safety. That means that as Mayor, working with community leaders and residents, we will establish the priorities and policies of policing. That means removing functions that are not appropriate for policing, including mental health crisis response, and restructure the police department appropriately. I strongly believe that we must right-size the NYPD and, yes, that includes reducing the number of uniformed officers in the force. When I am Mayor, I will run a full audit of the NYPD's budget -- including the out of budget expenses such as settlements -- to assess the facts and make necessary cuts, including to the number of uniformed officers. I believe in investing in community driven solutions to gun violence and crime. As laid out in the Gun Violence Prevention Plan that I released, I will invest in a Participatory Justice Fund to support these solutions, increase the money going to violence interrupters, and remove the NYPD from our schools to name a few of the initiatives that I will champion. We must institute a shift from "containment and control" policing that produces strategies like unconstitutional "stop and frisks" and make "community and problem-oriented policing" the model, which requires collaboration and partnership with other agencies and communities. This approach focuses on the underlying conditions that foster crime and emphasizes working with governmental partners to solve them and prevent crime.

When I am Mayor, I will do the following:

1. Run a full audit of the NYPD's budget -- including the out of budget expenses such as settlements -- to assess the facts and make necessary cuts, including to the number of uniformed officers
2. Move mental health calls, routine traffic violations, and school safety out of the NYPD. Assert civilian oversight of all policies and priorities of the NYPD on the front end. We cannot only assert civilian oversight to engage in discipline. We must prevent the nefarious acts from happening at the outset.
3. Eliminate the Vice Squad.
4. Hire a police commissioner that has not just moved up the ranks of the NYPD rank and file. We need a new model of leadership to work as a partner with the people to transform policing.
5. Create a shift from "containment and control" policing that produces strategies like unconstitutional "stop and frisks" and make "community and problem-oriented policing" the model, which requires collaboration and partnership with other agencies and communities.

2. How would you deal with Black and Hispanic communities being subjected to allegedly unnecessary and/or illegal police arrests and try to change the culture of our police force?

We have seen in New York City, as we have across the country policing work exactly as intended –to contain and control those who society fears. This has resulted in the unfair, unnecessary and illegal targeting of Black and LatinX communities, often criminalizing poverty, as in the case of Eric Garner who was killed for allegedly selling an untaxed cigarette. As a result, trust in police and the government that employs them has eroded and the presence of law enforcement makes too many people feel less safe. As a civil rights attorney, former Chair of the Civilian Complaint Review Board who sent the case for administrative proceeding to get former Police Officer Daniel Pantaleo, Eric Garner’s killer, off of the police force, I know the problems and the solutions to police abuse.

In my many roles fighting the structural racism that undergirds how we handle public safety in this country, I also know the community investments that demonstrators rightly demand, will produce public safety and dignity in communities of color. I have fought for criminal justice reforms in the US and in South Africa and spoken out against over-policing and misconduct. I believe deeply in closing Rikers and creating meaningful reentry opportunities in our communities. I will bring these principles, work experience and expertise into City Hall as Mayor. One of my top priorities will be hiring a police commissioner that has not just moved up the ranks of the NYPD rank and file. We need a new model of leadership to work as a partner with the people to transform policing. As Mayor, I will also ensure that poverty does not continue to be treated as a crime; that the police department no longer acts as a first responder for mental health crises or other functions that need trained professionals and do not require a badge or a gun. With most NYPD calls reporting non-criminal problems, we must reengineer how we respond to the crisis and non-crisis needs of our residents. I will demand law enforcement accountability and culture change. I believe we can demilitarize the force while still effectively responding to and investigating serious crime, illegal guns, and threats of terrorism. We can and must forge real partnership and community power through community participation in policy and priority-setting as well as a civilian commission tasked with formal and transparent stakeholder input. Putting the public back in public safety means that there must be civilian oversight and authority over every policy and program decision the NYPD makes.

3. The NYPD seems top heavy with highly paid personnel and extensive administrative redundancies. Will you attempt to resolve this, and, if so, how?

As Mayor I will absolutely attempt to resolve these problems. My first step will be running a full audit of the NYPD’s budget -- including the out of budget expenses such as settlements -- to assess where the police department's senior leadership is bloated and redundant. Rightsizing the NYPD, reducing the number of uniformed officers in the force, doesn’t just mean taking officers off the street. It means addressing waste in the department at every level. For years the NYPD has made unsupported statements to defend their budget. This has in part lead to a bureaucracy that is top heavy, where too many resources go to funding administrative positions that don’t impact the department’s ability to respond to and investigate serious crime, illegal guns, and threats of terrorism. These resources would be better spent on programs at the community level like the ones I have outlined in my Gun Violence prevention plan, that have a proven track record of reducing crime.

4. Is it legally possible and reasonable to require all members of the NYPD to be legal residents of NYC?

It is legally possible to require all members of the NYPD to live in New York City but it will require legislation passed at the state level. Currently state law allows NYPD officers to live in any of the six counties that surround New York City. Police officers should live in the city they police. I support residency requirements for New York City Police officers but it is not a focus of my efforts to reform the NYPD because it is a State issue. There is so much the Mayor can do to reform and improve the New York City police department. That is where my focus is.

THE ECONOMY

1. Due to the pandemic, more than a half million people have moved out of NYC. Many corporations that maintained large office spaces are operating remotely all or in part. How will your administration deal with this? Do you plan to attract new residents and if so, how? How would you entice companies and professionals to lease commercial space in the city?

First, we must recognize this is a pandemic-driven crisis. Economic recovery requires a sound roll-out of the vaccine, and a strong cheerleader that leverages all the city can do to champion that it is safe and open for business. Attracting businesses and residents back to New York City requires that we use our assets to stimulate the economy. I will leverage our spending on capital construction, support for small business, and build on the growth economy that is central to why New York City is a powerhouse of a local economy, from technology to life sciences to arts and entertainment. We must work to reestablish the conditions that create jobs for communities and an ecosystem for businesses. We must invest in our people's ability to take advantage of these assets in the form of city contracts, regulatory reforms, workforce development programs, and greater educational opportunities aligned to growth that will attract people and companies back to New York City. I support providing financial and regulatory relief to small businesses and believe we must also look at ways of lowering the cost of renting commercial space in New York City with a particular eye toward helping small businesses. New York City has the most dynamic workforce in the nation. It is a tremendous asset in attracting companies both large and small. As Mayor I will address our revenue crisis in a way that maintains the quality of city services, so residents want to stay here and those who have left want to move back. We also need to engage in new kinds of investments that support our recovery while addressing the structural issues that cause racial and gender inequities.

2. Do you expect to raise taxes? If so, on who/what? If not, how will you make up the pandemic shortfall?

New York City has a revenue crisis. Given the budget shortfalls this economic crisis has created, raising more revenue is a must. We need strategies that call us to come together and ask the wealthiest New Yorkers to step up and contribute what they can. This includes revenue options such as a millionaires tax, a mansions tax, a pied-a-tier tax, a vacancy tax on commercial properties, and halting the stock transfer tax rebate. Some of these are taxes that would be resolved in Albany, but there is a new progressive wind in our capitol so the chance to pass these types of taxes has never been higher.

3. What kinds of businesses and commercial activities do you expect to attract to the city? How?

We cannot just rebuild our economy, we need to transform it. We can and will place economic justice and equity at the center of our response, and ensure an economy that works for all New Yorkers. This means addressing the racial wealth gap, pay gap for women, and economic security for all. I would work to attract businesses and commercial activities to New York city that align with these goals. Supporting Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises is an integral part of the puzzle and we will expand the city's efforts in this area. We must look to attract businesses that bring with them quality jobs that give the people they employ a chance to rise and build a better life. I plan on attracting businesses and commercial activity to New York City by investing in our City. Through my plan New Deal New York we will invest 10 billion dollars in a Works Progress Administration-style infrastructure, stimulus and jobs program that will provide a shot in the arm of our City's economy, putting residents back to work and investing in the future of our communities. I will also leverage the power of our tens of billions of dollars in annual governmental spending. New York City's budget is larger than that of most states and our spending has a big enough impact to further important economic goals.

4. Do you expect your administration to rely more on virtual (remote) activity that could lower or eliminate the need for the city to rent and maintain large office spaces. For example, adjudicating Traffic Court summonses remotely to reduce the need for courtrooms.

I believe that it is important to give the employees of New York City the opportunity to return to work in offices, in person, after the pandemic once it is safe to do so. My administration also will be mindful of access issues for the 1.8 million New Yorkers who have had no broadband access or limited devices and have suffered during COVID as a result of closed schools and services, like family court, that have back-logged cases. We must expand access to the internet to increase but my administration will do all it can to ensure safety and access, including remote work opportunities. With the revenue crisis the city is currently facing due to the effects of COVID finding ways to make city government more efficient is more important than ever.

TRANSPORTATION

1. How will you address the issues of MTA cost overruns, inflated overtime, and inefficiencies?

The State of New York runs the MTA and that means, in addition to smart and knowledgeable mayoral appointees on the MTA board, establishing a new relationship with Albany is essential so that we are working as partners to bring efficiency to our public transit system. New York City deserves a 22nd-century public transit system that gets residents where they need to go, quickly, safely, and in a way that is sustainable. That starts with fixing our subways. To do that, we must actively engage in talks with Albany and Washington to shape transit investments and infrastructure dollars that we need to save the country's largest subway system and bring back an economy in the largest city in the country. A city that contributes 8% of the country's gross domestic product while representing only 1% of the landmass. Our contribution as a city is outsized and the investment we deserve from our federal government should mirror our contributions.

2. Do you have any plans for changes to the current transit system, roadways, parking, bike lanes, etc.?

I plan on expanding traffic safety and transit infrastructures such as red-light cameras and street redesign elements including protected cross-walks, bike lanes, and BRT bus lanes. If elected, I would implement the RPA Five Borough Bikeway Vision, and work with the Council and community boards to make it implementation a priority while expanding Citi-Bike citywide. I would make certain open streets permanent. In communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, open streets have become a lifeline, especially in low income communities of color with limited access to green space and parks. Infrastructure investment, including access to open space, is a racial justice issue. An equitable Open Streets plan helps address a legacy of infrastructural inequity. I would also designate Open Restaurant corridors, limit traffic and lower speeds on streets in commercial corridors with multiple small businesses using outdoor seating. We must improve maintenance and management of designated Open Streets by utilizing cost effective materials such as signage, traffic barrels, and lawn chairs. The success of a car-free Times Square provides a blueprint for low cost maintenance that can be replicated across the city. My administration would also explore investing in new innovative mass transit options like trackless tram and other ways to expand transit infrastructures giving city residents alternatives to cars. We must also upgrade our existing transit infrastructure to make it accessible for New Yorkers with disabilities.

CAMPAIGN CONTACT

If our members have any additional questions or wish to get involved, what is your campaign contact information?

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THE VRDC THANKS YOU FOR YOUR RESPONSES.