

Questions for 2021 Mayor Candidates

Responses from Candidate: Eric Adams _____

GENERAL

1. Why are you running for Mayor?

I've lived in New York all my life. My single mom struggled to make ends meet for my five siblings and me. We didn't always know if we would come home to an eviction notice or food on the table. And that is why I've spent my entire adult life in public service. Because I lived the life of the people I want to help. I remember what it was like to live with crime. To be hungry. To be on the edge of homelessness. To be forgotten by the city you love.

That's why I put on a bulletproof vest as a police officer and walked the streets. That's why I fought racism in the department. That's why I stood up for human rights in Albany. And that's why I have spent my borough presidency making government work better for the people who need it the most.

And during my 35 years in public service, I have seen what works and what doesn't in New York. And the problems we face existed far before COVID hit. Because inefficiency leads to inequality. Mismanagement creates crises. We can't continue to run this city the way we have been.

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

My last 35 uninterrupted years of public service have prepared me to become mayor. Twenty two years as a police officer, eight years as a state senator, and seven years as the Brooklyn Borough President.

But ultimately, it is not my professional experience that uniquely qualifies to be Mayor. Character is on the ballot this year and it is the multitude of my personal experiences as a teenager suffering from police brutality on the floor of the 103rd precinct, as a dishwasher in a local restaurant to help my mother keep a roof over our heads, and as a mail clerk in a corporate office. I know what it's like to skip meals and go through missed meal cramps. It's time we have a Mayor who has been through a lot so he understands New Yorkers who are going through a lot.

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

The Mayor has to keep New York safe, healthy and prosperous. To do that, the Mayor has to be a leader who can unify many different people from many different backgrounds around one common cause.

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?

We must rethink our community planning processes to better ensure we have the infrastructure to support future growth. It is essential that we build a lot of needed affordable housing, as quickly as possible. But these efforts must also take into consideration the comprehensive impacts to our healthcare, education, and transportation networks. My report analyzing the 10-year impact of the rezoning in Downtown Brooklyn highlighted these needs throughout New York City. Our report found that despite the rezoning's intent to focus on commercial development, the exact opposite occurred: residential development. This unintended outcome strained education, transportation, and healthcare systems in Downtown Brooklyn. The current ULURP process is inadequate in addressing these outcomes, and more must be done to ensure we are accounting for these infrastructure needs in future development.

I have laid out quite a few ideas on how to expeditiously build affordable housing in our city.

We will convert a number of City office buildings into 100% affordable housing by taking advantage of more City workers working from home and consolidating workers that will still be in-person to free up space.

We will allow private office buildings and hotels to become housing. The pandemic has unfortunately left many of our hotels and office buildings empty. In some cases, their owners want to convert the buildings to housing, but current City regulations make that either too expensive or too challenging. By making some zoning tweaks and other rule changes, we can facilitate conversions where appropriate and add desperately needed housing stock—particularly at hotels in the outer boroughs.

Additionally, outdated rules prevent New York developers from building the kind of small, cheaper micro-units that are common today around the world. Homeowners in single family zones are also prevented from legally leasing “accessory units” like “granny flats”. And single room occupancy units, or SROs, and basement apartments are still illegal, despite their common use elsewhere. By allowing for all of these to be built or legally used, we will quickly add hundreds-of-thousands of affordable apartments.

Lastly, community development corporations (CDCs) were a major reason New York was able to build its way out of the fiscal crisis in the 70s and 80s — by granting these local organizations property and funding to bring economic investment to their own neighborhoods. We will do that again to reinvigorate distressed lower-income areas by creating new economic activity and affordable housing.

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?

My office has prioritized education, and particular, STEAM education to help bridge the digital divide as well as the disparities between wealthy schools and poorer schools. Nearly 45% of my entire capital allocation since beginning my tenure as BP, some \$167 million, has gone to education projects, \$135 million to STEAM projects like computer labs, 21st century libraries, a forensic lab, and hydroponic greenhouses.

I would continue to prioritize these investments and build off successful programs that have begun under my tenure like the Brooklyn STEAM center in the Navy Yard. I allocated close to half the funding necessary to build out this state-of-the-art high school manufacturing space that partners high school students from throughout the borough to manufacturing mentorships with real innovative companies in the Navy Yard. Every borough deserves to have at least one of the centers that partner with Title 1 schools.

Additionally, we need to invest in green jobs in our city in order to ensure we can create direct pipelines of talent into the industries of the future. With waterfront assets like SBMT, the Red Hook Container Terminal, Port Richmond, the Brooklyn Navy Yard, and others, we have an opportunity to corner the market on wind power manufacturing and other green technologies, like we just secured in Sunset Park. In anticipation of that we must create a pipeline of education training from middle school, high school, college to educate our young people in this field using the forthcoming Harbor School Middle School, the Harbor School on Governors Island and universities like Kingsborough Community School. We would also expand on our efforts in Brooklyn to bring aquaponic, hydroponic, and other small-scale urban agriculture programming into classrooms, understanding that these hands-on educational experiences have a powerful impact on STEAM enrichment and healthy eating habits.

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

In December, I released a report called “Bridging the Digital Divide for Every New Yorker with a Universal Internet Guarantee,” which outlines tangible steps to ensure that school children are not being lost due to lack of infrastructure.

I would do this by creating a “Mandatory Inclusionary Internet” requirement for new developments akin to the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing program, which requires new developments in rezoned areas to provide a certain amount of affordable units. In addition, I would:

- Require providers of 5G to offer a free or low-cost high-speed Internet option targeted to low-income New Yorkers.

- Create a free municipal Wi-Fi network using the infrastructure provided by the City's abandoned "NYCWiN" initiative.
- Expedite the timeline for installing LinkNYC kiosks, which provide free public gigabit Wi-Fi.
- Wire the City's bus stops and shelters with USB charging ports and free Wi-Fi.
- Use votes on the Franchise and Concession Review Committee (FCRC) to hold providers accountable for offering affordable Internet to all New Yorkers as a condition of their franchise renewal agreements.
- Work with cable franchisees like Spectrum, Altice, and Verizon, to provide free or low-cost broadband to all low-income New Yorkers, modeled after efforts like Spectrum Internet Assist and Altice Advantage Internet.

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?

The impact of our public education budget must be felt by our students, and that means in the classroom. We will engage in top-to-bottom agency budget reviews under my leadership, instituting a agency-by-agency Inequality Impact Test that prioritizes spending that has the best chance of reversing historic financial and health gaps. We will reform our contracting rules and processes to better monitor vendor performance in real-time, and we will renegotiate or eliminate unnecessary or unproductive agreements. At the beginning of our administration, all contracts over \$10 million will be put under immediate review, and those that are ineffective, or can be done better by the City, will be eliminated.

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?

The root of our City's inefficiency is in its agencies, which work in parallel, instead of in concert--and often in direct conflict with each other. By mandating inter-agency, and intra-agency, coordination and designating existing senior staff to a citywide council that meets regularly to align goals, we will institutionalize coordination to reduce inefficiency and inequality.

That council will be tasked with three specific mandates:

- Define the mission of each agency
- Ensure the missions of the agencies meet the overall mission of the City government as defined by city leadership
- Evaluate agencies to ensure no agency's actions conflict with another agency

Efficiency mandates mean nothing without oversight and a leader dedicated to ensuring success. Our Efficiency Czar will conduct quarterly agency and department audits to continuously uncover inefficiency in the City government and make suggestions for changes.

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.?

Regardless of whether they can, it's incumbent upon the DOE Chancellor to ensure that this programming is easily accessible to any student that would like to participate. For example, in 2018, I released a report "Physical Education Access and Infrastructure: Building the Full Personhood of New York City's Student Population", that while focused on athletics and physical education, could be applied to all of the above. In the recommendations, I called for:

- Appoint a dedicated, high-level schools sports czar within the New York City Department of Education (DOE) or Mayor's Office who can work with schools to ensure that physical fitness is a priority and that schools have the proper infrastructure and space they need for physical education. Previously, this position was under former Chief Executive Officer of the Office of School Support Services Eric Goldstein, who also oversaw school bus and school food policy. The position should be one that is dedicated solely to school athletics. This position could be responsible for:
 - Advocating for transparency and reform in the space/field permitting process
 - Connecting PSAL programs to each other and to schools that want them
 - Putting together an executive committee of industry experts to suggest new policies going forward
- Prioritize capital funds for gym space at a greater level than already announced. Include updates to current spaces that have not been renovated in years. The current funding level only addresses a small portion of the schools in need. There must be a specific plan put in place now to fill this gap by 2028.
- Have the DOE develop public-private partnerships to further athletics in schools.
 - For schools with no dedicated gym space, identify existing, underutilized spaces within a quarter-mile of schools that could work as temporary school sports facilities while new physical education space construction occurs

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?

Nearly one-half of all New Yorkers speak a language other than English at home, and new New Yorkers from hundreds of different countries move here every year. Their kids may have very different cultural norms that affect how they learn and their ability to succeed in an American classroom. New York City should institute a robust professional development program in culturally responsive education for its existing educational workforce. While steps can be taken in the future to recruit and retain more teachers of color and more teachers who have undergone training in culturally responsive education as part of their undergraduate and graduate education, right now the reality is that there is a need for a citywide program to equip existing educational personnel with the tools for culturally responsive education. New York City

teachers must be supported with several days of training per year as they look for practical ways to implement culturally responsive education in their classrooms. Curriculum and programming needs to better reflect the student population to inspire and empower our young people, and that process needs to start in elementary school.

Additionally, we will build on the efforts of NYC Men Teach and pursue a robust recruitment of teachers and administrators of color, with a goal of matching student demographics within five years of implementation. Doing so will support our efforts to bring positive role models into our classrooms that can connect with, inspire, and educate our diverse student population.

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

I have put forth a plan that would add five additional specialized schools during my time as mayor. We need to expand access to high-quality and in-demand schools by building more of them in the short term. That said, we must reimagine our entire education system to bring up the quality of existing schools in every neighborhood. Specialized high schools only serve a small percentage of our scholars and we must ensure that every school is educating our young people to the fullest. We must look at successful models like the Eagle Academy for Young Men to identify the tools that work to educate our most marginalized. And we must harness the new norm of “remote learning” to allow students to take classes at schools that cater to their interests.

HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

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

Any solutions to homelessness need to acknowledge the different types of people who are homeless. Each requires different solutions.

For many families experiencing homelessness, they are often in situations where they cannot pay their rent for a few months and need some help making up the difference. We need to reinstate the Advantage program that would help families make up the difference between what they could pay and what they needed to pay. I have also been a long-time supporter of the Home Stability Support program which is pending in Albany which would serve as a new statewide rent supplement for families and individuals. If passed, HSS will be 100% federally and state-funded, and will replace all existing optional rent supplements.

For single adults who are experiencing homelessness, we need to build options of housing that allow them to get on stable footing. Right now, there is an excess capacity of hotels in the outer boroughs, and the city should purchase them and retrofit them into dorm-style housing with wraparound services.

For those who are on the street, we need to help them get the care they need and mental health services. During my time as borough president I fully funded the first mobile shower and care bus in Brooklyn that provided services and a place for street homeless individuals a place for a hot shower. We need more of these buses throughout New York City.

Also, in concert with my late colleague and friend Lew Fidler, I prioritized support for Runaway Homeless Youth by leading the charge to extend the age of designation from 21 to 25. RHY are largely LGBTQ+ individuals and are some of the most vulnerable among our homeless populations.

For families with children, we must provide additional priority to students for affordable housing in areas where they are attending schools even if they are currently in shelter elsewhere. We must create stable housing solutions for our young people so we do not perpetuate the cycle of instability for future generations.

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

This is an important issue to me because I was housing insecure as a young man. That's why I fought for affordable housing my entire career, including:

- The Faith-Based Development Initiative, which helps local houses of worship explore opportunities for developing their properties.
- The Brooklyn Mitchell-Lama Task Force, which helped secure \$250 million from the City to save more than 15,000 subsidized units from market rates.
- Projects like the one I'm pushing in Brownsville to create housing where it is needed. (174 affordable apartments--50% would be for the formerly homeless and 87 would be supportive housing units for youth aging out of foster care.)

Building more affordable housing in a financial crisis will require all options to be on the table and all stakeholders at the table, including:

- Building smaller, cheaper units (SROs);
- More partnerships with local community developers to leverage City-owned property and meet community standards;
- Adding density to manufacturing areas in desirable parts of Manhattan (lower-income areas should not bear the burden alone)
- Convert illegal basement apartments to legal units

-What is your opinion on adaptive reuse of commercial buildings to create affordable housing?

I am supportive of adapting commercial buildings to create affordable housing. However, I also support converting underutilized city-owned buildings to do this as well. We have an affordable housing crisis and we must be innovative in addressing it. This action has the added benefit of being able to retrofit some of our older buildings to become more environmentally sustainable. Buildings make up 71 percent of New York City's greenhouse gases. By retrofitting them, not

only do we clean our air, we also reduce our energy bills which in turn supports deeper affordable housing.

-What is your position on rezoning in historic districts?

I don't believe that any corner of New York City should be off-limits to explore rezonings. However, our historic districts are a direct link to our city, and our country's origins, and we must pursue any rezonings in these districts with an extra layer of contextuality. Rezoning doesn't have to mean out of context density. In fact, we can utilize the tools of government to protect the past while also addressing the challenges of today and the future.

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?

Throughout this pandemic I have repeatedly said that any rent moratorium must be coupled with a mortgage moratorium as well. I have repeatedly called upon Governor Cuomo to implement such a moratorium over the past year. Small landlords, like myself, often have tenants to help subsidize their mortgage payments or their day-to-day jobs. We must do more to make them whole and we should explore property tax breaks and/or block grants to assist them if we are not instituting a similar moratorium.

I also believe that struggling building and apartment owners should get mortgage relief so that they can stay afloat and keep up apartments for their tenants even without rent payments. We need to provide these landlords with relief otherwise they will not survive this economic crisis, while developers stay afloat and will lead to further gentrification of areas.

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?

We must do a better job of securing funding from both the federal and state government to address the estimated \$32 billion state-of-good repair deficit that NYCHA faces.

NYCHA tenants are understandably skeptical of the City program to get more money out of the federal government by transitioning some complexes to private management under the PACT to Preserve program. But the program can also unlock billions of dollars to improve their homes. To raise needed revenue and give tenants more control over the process, we will provide free legal counsel to tenants going through the conversion. This will ensure that tenants can select an attorney who they trust to fight for their needs and the confidence that they will end up with the better housing that is promised.

In addition, I am supportive of infill development where appropriate. Not every development is going to be the right fit for infill development but we must maximize underutilized land to generate revenue to address capital needs and expand our affordable housing stock.

Most importantly, NYCHA is notoriously opaque about progress on repairs and its own spending. This has led to unacceptable conditions and huge deficits. We will apply crystal clear transparency through constant reporting of progress on apartment and building repairs, as well as spending, posted in real-time through a dashboard. We will also do an audit to see what budgeted money has actually been spent. And we will promote further transparency and tracking by placing QR codes on buildings as a way for anyone to point, click and track progress.

In addition, I would reorganize NYCHA administration in a way to decentralize the agency and put decision-makers closer to residents. This can be done by reorganizing NYCHA to mimic the NYPD's geographic breakdown (e.g. Brooklyn North and Brooklyn South Commands). We need tenants to have greater access to real power in the NYCHA structure, not have all decision makers holed up at 250 Broadway with little interaction with their customers.

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?

I joined the NYPD to change it from the inside after suffering brutality at the hands of police, and spent a good share of my career as an officer speaking out against racism and other systemic issues in the department. I am proud to have forced some of the worst behavior into the light, including the abusive use of stop and frisk, which I fought in the street and in court.

As an elected official, I have continued the fight, and laid out a plan for reform. It includes:

- Allowing communities to choose their own precinct commander from applicants.
- Recruiting officers from high crime neighborhoods.
- Making it easier for the "minor league" cops (parks department, CUNY, etc.), who are much more likely to be people of color, to be promoted to the NYPD in order to diversify the ranks and reduce bias.
- Civilianizing large parts of the police force which are not tasked with fighting crime, including, potentially, the police commissioner.
- Publicly releasing the department's own "monitoring list" of cops with records of complaints and violent incidents.
- Making it easier for cops to anonymously report bad behavior by their colleagues that results in swift action by the department.

My approach towards bettering policing will be to find savings in the police budget that can be used to prevent crimes so that we are not simply responding to them. For example, we can cut the overtime budget in half by properly deploying personnel.

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?

I will make big changes to the department — changes that I have been fighting for since I called out racism in the department as an officer — to ensure rights are respected and systemic bias is weeded out. We cannot have prosperity without public safety; and we cannot have public safety without good cops living up to their vow to respect and protect every New Yorker.

In addition to the items outlined above, we can do this by diversifying our police force not only in the ranks, but in the upper echelons of leadership and ensuring our officers are “their brother and sisters’ keeper” meaning that if an officer does not intervene when an illegal police action is taking place that those officers would be held accountable as well.

Finally, I would remove the internal investigation function from the Internal Affairs Bureau and empower the Department of Investigation to investigate over-policing claims.

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 I wrote in my *Real Recovery NYC* plan earlier this year, “the mission at its core is defunding reactive policing.” But moving forward on police reform does not mean we have to move backward on public safety. Through common-sense measures such as department-wide civilianization, overtime reforms, and forensic auditing, I believe we can divert significant amounts of wasteful spending out of the NYPD and into initiatives that directly impact upstream feeders of crime. That includes funding for our local health care safety net, investments in early childhood development and doula home visit services for new parents, and targeted allocations for initiatives that impact at-risk populations, such as the extending Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) into a full year program, investing in life coaches for foster youth through Fair Futures, and screening universally for dyslexia in schools.

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

The police department suffers from bias and needs structural reforms. One reason the NYPD continues to be plagued by incidents of bias and brutality is that the department still needs to become much more diverse. We will address this by recruiting from the very same neighborhoods that are suffering from crime, which are mostly Black and Brown, and by allowing peace officers at City agencies -- who are not police officers and who are also more likely to be Black and Brown -- to be promoted to the NYPD.

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?

I have a series of proposals in my 100+ Steps Forward plan that discuss how to revive our economy, support small businesses, and bring talent to our city.

First of all, for New Yorkers who are already here, I want us to eliminate the fees for starting (or re-starting) a small business. The last thing we want to do in an economic crisis is charge people to start a new business--and re-start a closed one. All filing and registration fees will be eliminated.

Then I want to attract new out-of-town businesses. The Relocation Employment Assistance Program (REAP) has successfully drawn new businesses here from outside the state by providing a tax credit per employee per year if they locate in certain areas of the city. We will expand that to bring more business to New York.

Lastly, we will organize the largest employers in New York to develop, fund and implement a marketing plan for our city to the rest of the world unlike any ad campaign we have ever undertaken. In addition to pitching our city as the place to visit, live and invest, we will showcase our commitment to public health and public safety to inspire confidence that this is the place to be.

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

As you know, New York City does not have control over the entirety of its finances. As such, I would advocate for a temporary COVID recovery tax on those who make \$5 million or more to assist in our recovery to protect essential services for education, public safety, and healthcare from being gutted.

We can also generate \$1-2 billion annually by instituting a "Recovery Share"--a modest increase to the income taxes of city earners who make more than \$5 million a year, sunseting after two years. Those funds would go directly into the initiatives that help us bounce back from the pandemic, including testing and vaccination programs, anti-hunger efforts, and financial help for those New Yorkers and industries hardest hit by COVID-19.

At the same time, I would call on all my agencies to find savings of between 3-5% coupled with an equity impact analysis to ensure that any cuts were not disproportionately put upon those that can least afford it, namely the Black and Brown communities where COVID underscored existing inequities.

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

I want New York City to model the success story that is Brooklyn and attract all industry and business. From light manufacturing to bio-technology, Brooklyn has been at the forefront of New York City's growth over the past decade. As Brooklyn Borough President, prior to COVID, I oversaw record economic development growth in Brooklyn. After the recession of 2009, and by the end of 2017:

- The number of businesses in Brooklyn grew by 32%
- Private sector employment reached a record of 613,400 jobs in 2017, an increase of 39 percent since 2009
- Employment in the tech industry in Brooklyn reached a record of 9,800 jobs in 2017. With an average salary of \$92,900, tech is among the borough's highest-paying industries.
- The unemployment rate fell from 9.9 percent in 2010 to 4.6 percent in 2017, the lowest annual level since the data series was created in 1990.
- Taxable business sales grew by 48 percent between 2009 and 2016 (slightly faster than the citywide growth rate of 44 percent), reaching a record of \$13.6 billion in 2016

However, I am particularly interested in making New York City the urban agriculture capital of the world. We must do more to support this burgeoning industry and the benefits that it can bring--from healthier food consumption, to cheaper produce, and to reduced congestion on roadways--and provide economic incentives and the proper zoning for this business sector to grow. This has been a key aspect of my tenure as borough president and I look forward to expanding this further citywide.

Additionally, life sciences is one of the fastest-growing industries in the world—and these companies want to locate in cities where they will have access to leading hospitals, universities and investors. To bring them to New York, we will double-down on the existing life sciences initiative with incentives and zoning changes that will draw in private investment and federal dollars for research.

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 the pandemic has shown us many ways we can be more efficient with remote work and it has shown us many ways that human interaction is necessary for team-building and the flow of creativity. For jobs that don't fit into the latter category I do plan to rely on remote activity as there are significant potential cost savings.

Last year, I called for an audit of city leased office space to determine where it could be consolidated and leases could be ended to save money thanks to the shift to remote work.

For example, in my 100+ Steps Forward for NYC I have called for this with respect to the NYPD. Most people don't realize that a large number of our cops don't actually spend their workdays fighting crime. Many, for instance, do clerical work, move barricades, and drive trucks. And even police officers tasked with fighting crime spend huge amounts of their time on court appearances and paperwork, not out in the street or conducting investigations or preventing crime. We can save \$500 million annually through strategic civilianization of NYPD units where the existing ratio of police officers to civilian workers is simply not necessary, and by lowering overtime costs using technology to limit time wasted on paperwork and court appearances. That money can then go right into programs proven to reduce crime, such as our Crisis Management System.

TRANSPORTATION

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

I would call on the creation of voting members to represent each of the boroughs in order for New York City to have a larger voice on the MTA's budget and oversight. As it stands, our suburban neighbors to the east and north have a much greater say on the MTA's budget which prohibits our voices from being equally heard on oversight issues.

In addition, I believe we must look to our sister agencies around the world for best practices, particularly on capital project delivery. Why can Switzerland build the longest and deepest train tunnel in the world for \$12 billion and in 17 years from approval to delivery, while it took the MTA 10 years to construct the first phase of the Second Avenue Subway for \$1.7 billion a kilometre.

I will use my MTA appointees to be laser focused on finding efficiencies and modeling best practices from around the world to drive down costs and deliver projects on time, namely by fostering a more competitive bidding process, and prioritizing transit capacity in under-served, transit-starved outer-boroughs as opposed to projects that look very nice and are very expensive but don't deliver added service to riders.

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

New York City's transportation system is the lifeblood of our economy, and in turn the nation's economy. Without a robust transit system our economy does not work. As Mayor, I would focus on the area that New York City has the most control over: our streets. This means a rapid deployment of bus enhancements like real Bus Rapid Transit in appropriate corridors, expansion of Select Bus Service improvements to all our bus routes, a bolstered bike and

pedestrian network that focuses on high crash corridors and the missed connections in our bike networks.

New York City is home to the only bike share system that does not receive public subsidy. To quickly expand our bike and scooter share system to neighborhoods across New York City that are transit deprived, we will upfront capital costs for private providers. Then, in addition to building out protected bike lanes throughout the city, we will also find unused space such as road space under elevated highways and railways that can become bicycle superhighways. We can go further by building out protected bike and pedestrian infrastructure to safely connect neighborhoods far from large open spaces to destination parks.

We will pedestrianize more of the city where there are multiple transit options and where we can discourage car use to attract visitors with more open space and open markets, while improving public safety and making the city more livable for its residents.

In addition, I would advocate for the expansion of the Atlantic Ticket program that I championed in Brooklyn which provides reduced fares and a free transfer to the bus and subway system for intra-city travel on the regional rail networks like the LIRR in the case of the current pilot program. This program must be expanded in Queens, the Bronx, and Manhattan. The program takes advantage of existing assets and better utilizes them while providing tangible time savings and benefits to New York City riders.

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.