

Central Brooklyn Independent Democrats: 2021 Mayoral Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name: Scott Stringer

Office Sought: Mayor

Candidate Email Address: scott@stringerformayor.com

Candidate Phone Number: 646-236-4090

Campaign Contact Name: Maria Martinez

Campaign Contact Phone: 845-863-4453

Campaign Contact Email: maria@stringerformayor.com

Name of person filling out this questionnaire: Maria Martinez

Please answer each of the following questions to the best of your ability:

1) If elected, what would be your top priority in your first term?

While I would not elevate this over other areas of focus, housing is essential to my holistic vision for recovery and progress:

Housing as a Human Right: As a former housing organizer, I understand that the crisis of homelessness in our city is a product of decades of policy failure by all levels of government to build the housing we need. As mayor, I will build affordable housing that is actually affordable to working people and New Yorkers on the brink, including the one-third of shelter residents who go to work every day. Too much of our so-called affordable housing today is built for families making \$80,000 a year or more. We need to be targeting more of our resources towards extremely low and very low income families, those making \$58,000 a year or less for a family of three (two parents working minimum wage jobs). But that's just a start. As Comptroller, I have laid out specific plans to end the 421-a tax giveaway and re-invest those dollars in building more affordable units; to create a Land Bank/Community Land Trusts to turn city-owned vacant lots into 100 percent affordable units; and to triple from 5 percent to 15 percent the set-aside of new units for homeless families. Finally, my Universal Affordable Housing plan would require that every single new residential development in the city, in every neighborhood, set aside 25 percent of all units for affordable housing.

2) What personal and/or professional experiences do you believe make you uniquely qualified to run for New York City Mayor? Attach resume or CV if desired.

The vision of my campaign is to build a more just, affordable and progressive New York. In the past nine months, we've all watched our city and its families endure enormous pain, most of it in communities of color. Far from ending the tale of two cities, we've seen age-old disparities rise to the fore and devastate whole communities. We must acknowledge that today we have a public health crisis, an economic crisis, and a social justice crisis raging all at once, and we must bring new ideas and new leadership to tackling them. As a former state Assemblymember for 13 years, as a former Manhattan Borough President for eight years and now as New York City Comptroller, I believe I have the experience and the vision to do that – by investing in our community health networks and delivering real healthcare to every neighborhood; by speeding tangible relief to our small businesses through targeted grants and tax credits; by fundamentally shifting resources

away from our criminal justice system and towards community-driven solutions to building safer, healthier communities; and by turning back the clock decades on environmental injustice inflicted on too many of our neighborhoods.

New York City's next mayor will oversee a massive recovery effort, and we must reopen our economy in a fundamentally different way than we closed it. This will require policy expertise, government managerial experience, coalition-building skills and political savvy, and a bold vision — with detailed, actionable plans — for a more just, equitable, and sustainable city. It is this very combination of skills, experiences, and vision that I bring — uniquely, I believe — to this race.

3) List all of your endorsements, including but not limited to elected officials, unions, political clubs and community-based organizations.

- Congressman Adriano Espaillat (D-Bronx & Manhattan)
- Congressman Jerry Nadler
- Congressman Jamaal Bowman (D-Bronx)
- Sen. Alessandra Biaggi (D-Bronx)
- Sen. Robert Jackson (D-Manhattan)
- Sen. Brian Kavanagh (D-Brooklyn & Manhattan)
- Sen. Jessica Ramos (D-Queens)
- Sen. Julia Salazar (D-Brooklyn)
- Assemblymember Robert Carroll (D-Brooklyn)
- Assemblymember Catalina Cruz (D-Queens)
- Assemblymember Dick Gottfried (D-Manhattan)
- Assemblymember Maritza Davila (D-Brooklyn)
- Assemblymember Yuh-Line Niou (D-Manhattan)
- Assemblymember Diana Richardson (D-Brooklyn)
- Assemblymember Carmen De La Rosa (D-Manhattan)
- Assemblymember N. Nick Perry (D-Brooklyn)
- Assemblymember Linda Rosenthal (D-Manhattan)
- Assemblymember Al Taylor (D-Manhattan)
- Assemblymember-elect Amanda Septimo (D-Bronx)
- Council Member Costa Constantinides (D-Queens)
- Council Member Diana Ayala (D-Bronx & Manhattan)
- Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer (D-Queens)
- RWDSU
- CWA District 1
- CWA Local 1180
- CWA Local 1101
- CWA Local 1109
- CWA Local 1106
- CWA Local 1102

4) What, if any, groups or industries will you not accept campaign contributions from? If any, please note specifically whose money you will not accept.

My campaign is not accepting money from real estate developers, lobbyists or fossil fuel executives.

5) How do you propose helping NYC recover from the COVID pandemic and resulting economic recession, particularly given the projected shortfall in city revenue?

The immense financial and social disruption caused by COVID-19 serves as a stark reminder of how we need to rethink every element of government and do all that we can to make our communities stronger. As mayor, one of my first jobs will be to stabilize the city's budget, and do it in a way that protects vital services. It is hard to foresee the precise challenges we will be facing in January 2021, but among the priorities that I have laid out since COVID-19 struck, and which I am committed to advancing as mayor, include detailed, comprehensive plans [to save small businesses](#), [protect frontline workers](#), [keep children attached to childcare and our schools](#), [protect the homeless](#), [overhaul workforce training programs and provide free tuition to CUNY community colleges](#), and [lift up minority and women-owned businesses](#).

6) What measures would you take to improve educational opportunities for all students in NYC? How do you plan to ensure that all NYC children are able to attend high-quality, integrated schools? Do you support D15's integration plan as it has been implemented? What changes, if any, would you make to the current D15 integration plan?

The efforts of District 15 to move the dial on integrating schools is something we should all celebrate. The new process has succeeded in creating more diverse schools and as such should serve as a model for other communities around the city. I also believe, however, that there is no one-size-fits-all plan when it comes to creating more diverse schools. Every district is different, and every district deserves a chance to engage in its own open, transparent planning process -- efforts that I would support as mayor with additional funding and focus.

As a parent with two children in city public schools, improving educational outcomes for all students is not some theoretical conversation for me -- it is something my family and I live every day. Among the steps I would take as mayor, many of which I have detailed in my time as Comptroller, include the following:

- I will work to raise educational outcomes at every level starting with the largest investment in early childhood education in the nation through my "NYC Under 3" plan that would provide universal affordable childcare for New Yorkers.
- I will invest in a large-scale teacher residency program, to ensure new teachers are well-prepared for a wide range of student needs they encounter in the classroom.
- I will establish a true 1:1 device policy and guarantee that every child has access to high-speed internet in their home.
- I will expand the ranks of social workers available in schools and ensure every school is staffed with a social worker, guidance counselor, and school nurse with an appropriate school to staff ratio.
- I will dramatically increase the City's investment in Career and Technical Education program.

7) How would you have handled the reopening of schools for the 2020-2021 academic year? How would you prepare for a second wave of this pandemic? How would you propose to ensure that the needs of highly vulnerable children with special needs, who are homeless, come from poor families, and/or live in households without adults who could aid their learning are not left further behind when remote learning has to be relied on?

In July 2020 -- months before the DOE communicated to parents anything approximating a plan -- I released [a detailed](#) blueprint with recommendations for safely reopening schools. I was pleased that the DOE eventually, if belatedly, adopted many of our recommendations, including mandatory masks, small group instruction, a full-time nurse in every school, and repurposing of all available spaces, including outdoor space. But we included a number of other suggestions that, unfortunately, the DOE has failed to date to embrace that I would have prioritized as mayor, including:

- **Investing in high quality remote learning.** The DOE has still failed to ensure that there is a baseline for remote instruction for every child in every school. The DOE needs to provide more support to educators to improve remote learning through supervision and observation, and establish clear best practices about how to make robust instruction available when teachers and children are not together in the classroom.
- **Give every student who needs one a free internet-connected device.** If there is one takeaway from the City's experience with remote learning, it is that a lack of technology greatly reduces children's ability to connect with their school community and access resources they need to progress. It is unconscionable that more than 10 months after this pandemic began, there are still tens of thousands of students without proper devices.
- **Engage and support parents and caregivers in multiple languages.** Parents are an indispensable partner in helping their children learn, and many parents have become more active in their children's education during this time of school closures. To better support parents and families, the DOE should formalize a process for parent feedback at the school and district levels with more opportunities for parents to learn about expectations for remote learning and understand the curriculum and available resources.

8) Do you support allowing non-citizen New York City residents to vote in City-based elections? Why or why not?

Yes, I support non-citizen voting. Our immigrant friends and neighbors contribute mightily to our city, which is why I support the extension of voting rights in municipal elections to all New Yorkers with green cards or work authorizations.

9) Do you support any campaign finance reforms for NYC? If so, please describe.

In many ways, New York City's campaign finance system is a model for the nation, and I am proud to be running a campaign focused on low-dollar, grassroots organizing. As I have said, I have chosen to not accept donations from real estate developers, lobbyists and fossil fuel executives, and there is no question that more could be done to limit the influence of large corporate interests or those with business before the city in our city elections.

I think in the near-term, it will be equally important to focus on improving ballot access in New York, which despite recent advances remains woefully behind many other states in encouraging voters to register and to vote. New York City took a big step forward when it instituted Early Voting, which I was proud to support as part of a 16-point plan that I released in 2016 entitled "[Barriers to the Ballot.](#)" But now it is time to keep the progress going by advancing other reforms outlined in my report, like same-day voter registration, an improved and expanded system of automatic registration, and "no-excuse" absentee voting.

10) Now that the State government has passed the Reproductive Health Act, what steps would you have the Council and City Hall take to increase reproductive healthcare access, including maternal healthcare, and to do so equitably?

I was proud to advocate for passage of the Reproductive Health Act, which codified the protections afforded by Roe v. Wade into State law and will ensure that no New Yorker has to travel outside of our state again to obtain abortion care. But gaps in access to comprehensive, culturally responsive reproductive health care remain. As mayor, I would advance a number of initiatives to expand access to and improve reproductive health outcomes for our communities, in particular those with low incomes, immigrant New Yorkers, and Black women, who we know are far more likely than white women to experience pregnancy-related complications. These include investing in public education on pre- and postnatal care, supporting expanded access to doulas, increasing outreach and aftercare within our public hospital system to better identify and treat conditions such as preeclampsia and postpartum depression, requiring healthcare providers to participate in implicit bias training, and driving additional investments in evidence-based programs such as home visiting. And to ensure more equitable access to abortion care, I believe New York City should continue to fund abortion directly, a budget request I [made in May 2019](#).

11) The MTA is facing a significant revenue shortfall and many parts of the city lack access to reliable public transportation. What measures would you implement and/or enforce, to promote safe, efficient, and accessible transportation options for mass transit users, pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers in Brooklyn and in the City as a whole?

With plunging ridership and falling tax revenue, the MTA has confronted huge deficits in the last year. With the December stimulus and the Democrats reclaiming the Senate, however, I'm confident that they will be made whole. Now, it's time to look forward and build the transit system our city needs and deserves.

When it comes to system improvements, the bus system will be a top priority in my administration. The city controls the streets, traffic lights, curbs, sidewalk, and bus shelters (via franchise). I'm going to use that power to prioritize buses and make sure they're fast, frequent, and reliable for the millions of New Yorkers who use them each and every day. That includes more dedicated bus lanes and busways, improved enforcement, more bus shelters, and more transit signal priority.

And on rail, I'll work with the MTA to integrate commuter rail into our five-borough transit system so that it costs only \$2.75 for an in-city trip from our 41 LIRR and Metro-North stations, and I will push the agency to increase so-called "off-peak" service. So many workers today -- from building service workers to construction workers, to home health aides and restaurant employees -- commute to and from work either late at night or very early in the morning, when subway service is erratic at best. We are literally leaving hundreds of thousands of workers stranded in the dark, waiting for trains that never seem to come. Our economy is no longer the Manhattan-centric, 9-to-5 model that predominated for decades, and it's time that our transit system caught up to this changed reality.

And finally, our city streets should be redesigned to prioritize both sustainable transit and community uses. This will include a robust network of protected lanes for buses and bikes as well as wider sidewalks for pedestrians, wheelchairs, and strollers. It will also include more space for plazas and playgrounds, outdoor seating, bus shelters, public restrooms, Citi Bike docks and bike parking, and containers to get garbage bags off of our sidewalks.

12) How would you ensure fairness in employment, salary, workplace conditions, and promotion? What is your position on strengthening and increasing access to union membership?

I will always fight for this city's workers. I have stood with labor throughout my career in advocating for stronger employment protections and policies, from expanding access to paid sick days and paid family leave, to increasing the minimum wage, to fighting employment-based discrimination and harassment, to ensuring union jobs are part of all our City's economic development. As Comptroller, I have doubled down on the work of our Bureau of Labor Law to set and enforce the prevailing wage and ensure workers know their rights and receive the compensation they are owed. I am especially proud to have gotten millions in unclaimed wages back in the pockets of hardworking New Yorkers who have been cheated out of pay.

While New York has taken important steps in recent years to address disparities in access to benefits like paid leave and to improve workplace conditions, particularly for low-wage shift and gig workers and communities disproportionately harmed by discriminatory hiring practices, there is more for us to do - and enforcement of existing laws is critical. That is why, as mayor, I will make sure that the Department of Consumer and Worker Protection and the Commission on Human Rights have the funds needed to be able to appropriately investigate and adjudicate all violations of our laws, including the salary history ban, and

other labor abuses. I will also advocate for investments in public education and resources for the business community so employers have the tools they need to be high-road employers in this changing landscape.

Union membership has led to safer work conditions, greater access to benefits, and increased economic security for represented communities across industries. But conservative attacks on unions nationwide have tried to undermine workers' voices while contributing to the concentration of wealth among a handful of corporations with outsized political influence. I will always support collective bargaining and fight for fair contracts that honor the labor of New Yorkers. And I want my administration to lead the nation in increasing support for worker-owned cooperatives and other employee-based management models proven to create higher quality, dignified jobs.

13) How would you ensure that underserved communities receive fair and equitable treatment from city government? What policies do you support that would level the playing field for historically marginalized groups?

For the past six years, I've called for a Chief Diversity Officer in City Hall and within every City agency to root out institutional bias and drive the representation of people of color and women across government. Our efforts succeeded this year, as Mayor de Blasio signed an executive order in July to appoint Chief Diversity Officers and implemented other recommendations I've made over the years to even the playing field for minority and women-owned businesses (M/WBEs).

As thousands of businesses struggle to stay afloat amid the economic fallout of COVID-19, it is painfully clear that the pandemic is disproportionately M/WBEs. In a recent survey by my office, 85 percent of M/WBEs reported they could not survive the next six months.

One of my first acts as Comptroller was to appoint a Chief Diversity Officer charged with evaluating and improving the City's M/WBE contracting. Our Chief Diversity officer has issued an annual report, "Making the Grade: New York City Agency Report Card on M/WBEs," which assesses how well the City is creating economic access and opportunities for minority and women-owned businesses. Every report letter grades city agencies on MWBE spending and offers recommendations meant to reduce barriers and increase opportunities for M/WBEs.

My plan to increase access and opportunities for M/BWEs includes expanding the promise of Local Law 1. The "next generation" of the program should boost the number of agencies required to prepare utilization plans, offer enhanced training to M/WBE officers, and hold agencies accountable for spending further down their supply chain by:

- Increasing Transparency: Many City agencies have no specific information for or about M/WBEs on their websites. City agencies should have robust information available to help guide business owners through the procurement process.
- Improving Data Entry: Agencies must redouble efforts to appropriately identify M/WBE contracts so existing spending can be tracked more effectively, thereby increasing the level of transparency and accountability.
- Creating a more comprehensive, all-inclusive M/WBE development program across all City agencies

- Streamlining the certification process and creating a universal certification application across local, state, and federal M/WBE programs.
- Developing a targeted plan to address areas where there is low M/WBE utilization even with M/WBE availability: spending within the Department of Education, COVID-19-related procurements, and the M/WBE Small Purchase Method.
- Establishing an initiative to pay M/WBEs and small businesses for their upfront overhead costs
- Requiring transparent timelines for RFP awards and notify vendors that did not receive awards of their option to debrief
- Requiring unconscious bias training for all City employees
- Creating set asides and tying M/WBE goal outcomes to cabinet-level performance.

I pledge to advance a comprehensive agenda for immigrants at City Hall and as Mayor would:

Build Out a Safety Net for Undocumented Workers

Undocumented workers are not eligible for a variety of federal safety net protections that are critical income supplements during both good and bad economic times. One in five frontline workers amid the pandemic are not U.S. citizens, yet these “excluded” workers have largely been left out of publicly-funded efforts to restart the economy. A gift last spring by the Open Society Foundations to devote \$20 million to provide one-time cash payments to up to 20,000 immigrant families in New York City who have so far been excluded from federal relief efforts was a welcome bright spot, but it remains a drop in the bucket compared to the overall need. In addition to lacking access to direct financial assistance, many immigrant New Yorkers continue to face barriers to obtaining the health care, legal relief, and social services that would improve their families’ well-being during this crisis, compounding the financial insecurity they are now experiencing. To safeguard the health and economic security of immigrants across the boroughs, the City should:

With new leadership in the White House, I remain hopeful that the federal government’s longstanding refusal to invest in undocumented individuals and their families will be coming to an end. In the meantime, the State should work to create an Excluded Workers Income Replacement Fund. The bottom line is that anyone who files taxes with an individual taxpayer number (ITIN) should qualify for safety net benefits, including unemployment insurance, that are pegged to traditional benefits. [A recent report from my office](#) found that in total, some 19 percent of frontline workers are non-citizens. Over a quarter of food and drug store, 22 percent of social service, and a striking 36 percent of cleaning service employees do not have citizenship status – none of them eligible for benefits under the Unemployment Insurance System or the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program. Our immigrant neighbors contribute mightily to our city economy, and there is no good reason why they should be excluded from safety net programs now or in the future.

Support Immigrant Entrepreneurs to Help Spur NYC’s Economic Recovery

Over 60 percent of independent, Main Street businesses are run by immigrant New Yorkers and over 53 percent of the workforce is foreign-born. City government must help immigrant entrepreneurs recover, stabilize, and reach new markets. In my administration, Small Business Services would help with marketing, promotion, and translation services to help businesses reach new customers beyond

their immediate neighborhood. I would pilot a new program to help proven, successful entrepreneurs open second businesses throughout the city, expediting permitting and helping with the costs of modifying these new spaces. I would also overhaul the City's approach to inspections and fines, allowing small businesses a "cure period" to address and fix violations, rather than penalizing them immediately.

Support Frontline Workers and Undocumented New Yorkers

More than 50 percent of the city's frontline workers were born outside of the United States, including many home health and child care providers and food delivery workers operating as independent contractors. Not only does this obligate them to pay twice as much in Social Security and Medicare taxes, it also provides them with few safety net protections if they are unable to work due to medical conditions or other factors. I am calling on the State to expand its unemployment, healthcare, and other safety net programs to cover independent contractors and extend basic safety net protections to New Yorkers regardless of immigration status — including those who are undocumented. My administration would also work with private partners to establish an emergency relief fund for all undocumented workers.

Launching a New York City Citizenship Fund

I will launch a new public-private New York City Citizenship Fund to help tens of thousands of legal immigrants cover the rising costs of the federal application to become a U.S. citizen. Citizenship fees have been skyrocketing for years, leaving low and moderate-income immigrant New Yorkers left to choose between putting food on the table and applying for citizenship. The Citizenship Fund would be seeded with City dollars that could then leverage additional private, charitable funds from those interested in helping their fellow New Yorkers become citizens. The citizenship fund, which would be administered by the City as a 501(C)(3), would work to ensure that eligible-to-naturalize immigrants in New York City can afford the application process at a modest cost to the city.

Revolutionizing Language Access

Language access remains a persistent problem within city agencies and it ultimately limits access to city services for immigrant communities. As Mayor, I will launch a review across city agencies to identify gaps in translation services and ensure that rules, regulations, inspections, appeals, applications, and services are provided in multiple languages. I also support the creation of [a community legal interpretive bank](#) and language services worker-owned cooperatives for languages of limited diffusion, as proposed by the New York Immigration Coalition, African Community Together, Asian American Federation and MASA.

Providing Legal Services for Immigrants

[According to an analysis done by my office](#), deportations in New York City soared by 150 percent in 2018, and administrative arrests by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) rose by 88 percent. Under a Stringer Administration, the City would provide truly universal representation for individuals in immigration proceedings by expanding existing funding for legal services and removing the criminal carve-out that restricts certain immigrants' access to City-funded services. My administration would continue to support the operation of the New York Immigrant Freedom Fund to

help pay bond for those detained during immigration proceedings. I have also called on the City and the State to act to restrict immigration enforcement operations in and near New York courthouses.

14) What policy and practice changes are needed for NYC government to ensure sufficient quality housing that actually is affordable for existing residents in Brooklyn neighborhoods?

Since my days in the state Assembly, I have fought against the weakening of rent laws, for the preservation of affordable housing, for programs to protect tenants in housing court, and for the creation of new affordable housing. In a speech last January, I proposed a fundamental rethinking our housing policy. The Mayor's housing plan does not build housing for those most in need.

First, we should require all new as of right developments greater than 10 units to provide 25% affordable housing to individuals making at or below 60% of AMI. Second, we should dedicate the construction of housing on city owned properties to individuals making less than 50% of AMI. Third, we should expand our homeownership programs to begin to fix the deep racial inequities that exist in homeownership rates. And finally, we need to end 421-A, an expensive program which historically has produced little housing, and replace it with a more targeted affordable housing subsidy.

15) What policies would you pass or enforce to ensure public housing/NYCHA repair, upkeep and security, and access to alternate housing and services when lacking essentials such as heat, gas and hot water? What is your position on "privatization" of public housing/NYCHA, and on City government sale of public housing "open areas" (outdoor seating & recreation plots) and air rights to private developers?

Since taking office in 2014, I have audited NYCHA over 15 times, more than all previous comptrollers combined. My audits revealed the poor management, lack of follow through, and structural issues that have caused the deplorable conditions in NYCHA apartments. I will start with an overhaul of NYCHA's management structure and bring the leadership back into City Hall. I will modernize the agency's procurement practice to ensure capital projects are advanced in a timely manner, modernize the apartment repair system so units do not sit unrepaired for months, and increase accountability by requiring transparency at every level.

Further, I will marshal city agencies to ensure that NYCHA is not left standing alone. I will use the Parks Department to repair the grounds and playgrounds, which are in dangerous conditions. I will work with DEP and HPD to ensure capital projects are advancing with all expertise available. I will work with DOITT to ensure there are more and better internet connections for families in NYCHA projects. And I will work with HRA to ensure social services are provided to seniors and those most vulnerable.

The "privatization" through the use of RAD should not be the first strategy relied upon by any mayor. Since 2001, both Republicans and Democrats in Washington D.C. have underfunded NYCHA by over \$1.8 billion. This has left a capital need of at least \$45 billion. As we discuss a new federal infrastructure bill to recover from COVID, it is essential that the next Mayor push the Federal Government to meet their moral obligation to fund the \$45 billion of capital needs. With a new president and Democrats now in the majority of the Senate, I will advocate for NYCHA to be fully funded in the next administration.

Further, I believe NYCHA's current attempts at developing "open areas" and selling air rights to private developers has been a failure because it does not engage residents. I will only seek to build on such sites after working with tenants to ensure the developments meet their needs first and foremost. I believe such

proposals should go through a ULURP-like process after a comprehensive community planning process with the residents and the local community.

16) Given the City's Covid and post-Covid economic crisis, how would you approach your role in addressing the city's carceral system, including the plan to close Rikers?

Rikers Island is a stain on this city, and we have not moved quickly enough to shut it down. To close its doors for good, we must take a more aggressive approach in reducing the jail population, which, while remaining near historic lows, has been steadily increasing over the last six months of this pandemic. That must include ending incarceration for technical parole violations, increasing the use of alternatives to bail, and identifying individuals who can serve the remainder of their City sentences at home.

Decarceration is not only a moral imperative but a fiscal necessity. As my office's latest report on DOC spending outlined, we now spend \$340,000 to keep one person in custody for a year. That money would be far better spent invested in supportive housing, mental health and substance use treatment, school-based social workers, community-based violence prevention such as Cure Violence, the Summer Youth Employment Program - a whole host of avenues that would actually begin to lift up communities, while reducing recidivism and opportunities for harmful interactions with the criminal legal system to begin with.

16) Describe your vision for public safety in New York City? What, if any, functions would you like to see removed from the police department? What agencies assume the functions removed from the NYPD?

As Mayor, I would take a multi-agency approach to community safety while transitioning responsibilities away from NYPD and investing in alternative responses and services. Substance abuse, homelessness, wellness checks, traffic incidents, suicidal subjects -- these are all public health challenges best managed by other specialists in city government who are better trained and better resourced to provide supports, services, and expertise to New Yorkers in need. Certainly DOHMH, DHS, HRA and DOT, to name just a few city agencies, have both the resources and the expertise to address these issues in ways that are more nuanced and more effective than the NYPD.

17) Do you support changes to the ULURP process and to other NYC zoning mechanisms? If so, what specific changes do you support?

In 2018, I proposed changes to the ULURP process including:

1. Restrict the City Planning Department's ability to override a community by requiring that if a ULURP proposal gets a "no" vote by the Community Board and Borough President, then the Planning Department can only approve by a super majority, which would include at least two borough presidents.
2. Give every Community Board an urban planner to allow them to both proactively propose and reactively respond to proposals.
3. Strengthen the community based planning process like 197-A to ensure city agencies must be responsive to them.
4. Make it easier to track proposals from city agencies (DCP, BSA, LPC, DOB) through a centralized database.
5. Update the Fair Share requirements and require a review of the requirements every 5 years to ensure a more equitable city.

6. Adopt comprehensive long-term planning.
7. Reform Landmarks and the Board of Standards of Appeals by adding Borough President and Public Advocate appointees to the boards.
8. Allow communities to propose zoning changes by creating an EIS fund, which due to the cost, is often the greatest barrier for a Community Board to propose changes to their district.
9. Create a new process that allows communities to have a voice in what is studied in EIS's to ensure the impacts of developments are appropriately known.

These proposals and several others related to specific actions are listed in my 2018 charter revision report, which can be found here. https://comptroller.nyc.gov/reports/a-new-charter-to-confront-new-challenges/creating-a-fairer-more-equitable-ny/#Giving_Communities_a_Stronger_Voice_in_Land_Use_Decisions

18) Do you have a plan to reduce and prevent homelessness in Brooklyn and NYC? Explain your plan.

I believe that the affordable housing crisis and homelessness crisis cannot be separated. As referenced above, I believe that affordable housing must be built for those most in need, the extremely low and very low income residents. This is outlined in my NYC for All report: <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/reports/nyc-for-all-the-housing-we-need/>

I believe that all as-of-right developments should be required to set aside 25% of their units for affordable housing.

I support common sense policies like setting aside 15% of all affordable housing units for those who are homeless, and increasing the number of supportive housing units to move individuals out of shelters.

Further, we must recognize that the threat of law-suit or eviction is often enough to make an individual 'self-evict.' These individuals must know that they are not alone in the fight. I believe the city should guarantee the right to legal counsel in Housing Court by increasing funding to legal services and ensuring a universal right to counsel. The current right to counsel only affects people making 200% of the poverty line or less, which is less than a full time minimum wage earn makes. At minimum this must be doubled.

Additionally, we as a city and state must look towards our voucher programs, which are critical resources to prevent eviction. This means both increasing their total number and increasing the dollar value to ensure that they at minimum meet the fair market rent as defined by HUD. The city voucher (as of October 2019) offers residents a voucher worth only \$1,323 for a household of 2 in a one bedroom, where the HUD voucher was \$1,714 (as of Jan 2020). For the city's voucher's to be useful, they must be worth at least the fair market rent.

In addition, we must increase the number of safe havens and shelter beds to reduce the number of individuals on the street. To read more about what we can do for street homeless please see my recent letter from Nov. <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/newsroom/as-winter-approaches-comptroller-stringer-calls-for-direct-support-to-help-new-yorkers-experiencing-homelessness-move-off-the-streets-into-shelter-and-housing/>

