

2013 Candidate Questionnaire

OVERVIEW

For New York City to compete in the global economy and provide the safety and quality of life New Yorkers deserve, our leaders must embrace a 21st Century vision for our streets that puts well-being of people first. StreetsPAC supports candidates for public office who will champion safe, complete and livable streets.

Safe Streets are safe enough for children, seniors, and people of all abilities to travel without fear of death or injury. Despite recent gains, our streets remain unsafe:

- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of preventable death in New York City; crash fatalities increased 12% in 2012 compared to 2011, and hit-and-run fatalities increased by 31% from 2010 to 2012.
- Although speeding is the top factor in NYC traffic deaths, police rarely enforce speeding laws on neighborhood streets, and prosecutors rarely pursue charges against sober drivers who kill.

To foster safe streets, StreetsPAC supports speed cameras and other enforcement strategies as well as changes in roadway design, which are proven to calm traffic.

Complete Streets encourage mobility and health by allocating space for walking, public transportation, bicycling and wheelchair access, and by prioritizing curbside access for taxis, delivery trucks and passenger loading over the underpriced curbside parking that now makes such uses difficult or impossible. For example:

- Select Bus Service using dedicated bus lanes has been an unqualified success, reducing travel times by 20% and increasing ridership.
- Increased bicycle lanes have made cycling for everyday transportation a viable option for thousands of New Yorkers. Protected lanes have been proven to reduce crash injuries among bicyclists, walkers and drivers by approximately 40%.
- Countdown clocks, sidewalk extensions and landscaped pedestrian safety islands make walking more pleasant and efficient.

StreetsPAC supports improving the quality and variety of transportation choices to improve personal mobility and build a more sustainable transportation system of complete streets.

Livable Streets are comfortable and welcoming to local residents and visitors and attract patrons to shops, restaurants, hotels and other local businesses. New Yorkers want to live, work and shop on livable, economically vital streets. Research shows:

- Pedestrian plazas, bike lanes, play streets and other amenities dramatically increase retail property values, and significantly raise other commercial and residential property values.
- The reduction and elimination of motor vehicle traffic on Broadway from Columbus Circle to Union Square has created a mecca for tourists as well as internet-based and other new-economy businesses.

StreetsPAC supports repurposing street space for the use of people to promote livable streets where commerce and community life can thrive.

Process and Deadlines. StreetsPAC is a political action committee registered with the New York State and New York City Board of Elections. This questionnaire seeks to elicit your views on the important issues facing New York City's streets. Your answers will help inform StreetsPAC endorsement and donation policy in the 2013 election.

All responses should be considered public, although StreetsPAC may at its discretion choose to disclose some, all or none of your responses. Responses may be shortened for publication. StreetsPAC may also disclose which candidates do not respond to this questionnaire. If you refer in your response to a position paper or your Web site, please specify the exact text you are referencing. By responding to this questionnaire, you give your agreement to the foregoing uses of your responses.

The StreetsPAC Advisory Board may ask to interview candidates submitting questionnaire responses.

Please submit questionnaire responses by May 24 via e-mail to: info@StreetsPAC.org

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please provide us with the following information:

Candidate Name: *Sondra H. Peeden*

Campaign Manager: *Christal Hickson*

Press Secretary: to be determined

Name and EIN/TID of Committee: *Sondra Peeden 2013*

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POLICY PROPOSALS

In a separate document, please articulate concrete and feasible policy and budgetary proposals to advance the following goals:

Safe Streets

- 1.Reducing the number of motor-vehicle crashes and conflicts among street users with appropriate infrastructure or roadway design changes, automated traffic law enforcement, or street- or neighborhood-specific changes in traffic rules
- 2.Ensuring thorough investigation of, and appropriate consequences for, drivers who commit traffic offenses that result in injury or death

Complete Streets

- 3.Encouraging New Yorkers to use public transit, walk or bicycle within the city, instead of driving
- 4.Repurposing street space to better meet transportation needs (please specify particular streets)

Livable Streets

- 5.Increasing the amount of public space for non-transportation use, such as plazas and street closure programs (e.g., Summer Streets and play streets.)
- 6.Harmonizing commercial and residential uses through licensing and regulation of trucking, deliveries, parking, street vending, greenmarkets, and other commercial activity affecting our streets

YES/NO QUESTIONS

1. Do you believe speeding cars are a public safety problem in your district/borough?
Y / N **YES**
2. Would you support enhancing penalties for aggressive, distracted and reckless driving under the New York City Administrative Code in order to deter such behavior? Y / N **YES**

3. Has the New York Police done enough to enforce the traffic laws?
Y / N **NO**
4. Do you support expanding Bus Rapid Transit with dedicated bus lanes in your district/borough? Y / N **Yes, with the other traffic infrastructure enhancements and access to alternative fuel.**
5. Should New York City government be providing economic support for ferry service as an extension of the public transit network? Y / N **YES**
6. Do you support continued expansion of the on-grid bike lane network in all five boroughs? Y / N **YES, with community input and support.**
7. Do you approve of the way that the NYC Department of Transportation is working to manage traffic? Y / N **NO!**
8. Do you approve of the process the NYC Department of Transportation and the Community Boards use to determine locations for bike-share facilities? Y / N **NO**
9. Do you support channeling buses and trucks to perimeter highways in order to reduce their presence on residential streets? Y / N **YES!!!**
10. Do you support closing New York City's parks to cars? Y / N **Not entirely.**
11. Do you support pedestrianization of street space to encourage tourism? Y / N **In areas where it makes sense, and where it would not impede commerce.**
12. Should the city make non-sensitive data concerning street use, street conditions and traffic crash investigations available in a timely, digital format to the public? Y / N **YES!**
13. If elected, will you give your support to candidates for Council Speaker and/or Community Board who openly support safe, complete and livable streets? Y / N **YES!**

PRIORITIES

1. Rank the following measures that local government can take to discourage unnecessary motor vehicle trips to the most transit-rich and high-traffic areas of the city (1 = most important, 5 = least important):

- A. 2 Remove financial incentives for “toll shopping” by equalizing or balancing tolls at different bridge and tunnel crossings
- B. 5 Use a system of dynamic pricing for access to the most congested areas
- C. 3 Give buses and vehicles-for-hire priority over private cars on city streets
- D. 4 Give delivery vehicles priority on city streets over private cars
- E. 1 Restrict commercial deliveries to late night and early morning hours, and ban the largest trucks from residential neighborhoods absent compliance with special permit and insurance requirements

Please state what other such measures you think are appropriate reduce unnecessary motor vehicle trips to the most transit-rich and high-traffic areas of the city:

Please see attached

2. Rank the following measures that local government can take to obtain community input concerning changes in the regulation or configuration of a street:
 - A. 4 Holding a "Town Hall" or open forum for affected community members
 - B. 1 Conducting a face-to-face canvass of residents and businesses on the affected street
 - C. 5 Conducting an online poll of neighborhood residents regarding the change
 - D. 3 Involving the community board and considering any resolutions it may pass on the subject
 - E. 2 Responding to complaints that arise after changes have been implemented

Please state what other such measures you think are appropriate in obtaining community input concerning such changes:

Regular community surveys by DOT and the NYPD in person and electronically. Outreach at community meetings and at local schools.

3. Rank the traffic violations upon which NYPD resources should be focused (1 = most important, 5 = least important):
- A. **2** Operating motor vehicles in excess of the speed limit
 - B. **3** Double parking, standing, and blocking of loading zones or bicycle lanes
 - C. **5** Traffic violations by cyclists
 - D. **4** Traffic violations by vehicles weighing more than 5 tons
 - E. **1** Failure to yield to pedestrians

Please state which other traffic-related enforcement activities you believe deserves greater resources from the NYPD:

I believe the current laws on the books are for the most part, adequate, and that the NYPD and related agencies should have a public education campaign to inform the public of often forgotten or overlooked laws and policies.

Thank you for completing the StreetsPAC 2013 Candidate Questionnaire.



We look forward to working with

1. Reducing the number of motor-vehicle crashes and conflicts among street users with appropriate infrastructure or roadway design changes, automated traffic law enforcement, or street- or neighborhood-specific changes in traffic rules.

A wise and seasoned legislator once declared to me that there is little reason for new laws, just adjustments to the current laws on the books. I agree with this statement almost fully, understanding that with technology, there may be new areas that need to be regulated.

For the most part, the 27th Council District in particular, is comprised of single and dual family homes, with distinct business/commercial areas on main streets. I have been a Queens resident for all of my life, and also have had the opportunity to travel extensively throughout the United States. I believe that the needs of our community calls for increased traffic enforcement to protect the most vulnerable among us, the elderly, children and the disabled. I believe that curbs should be upgraded to allow for the easy navigation of wheelchairs, walkers, baby carriages and other devices which manually and/or electronically assist in mobility for those who need it. Sidewalks should also be widened wherever possible.

I am not in favor of automated traffic enforcement in most instances. Due to the complicated nature of our traffic patterns, and the nuances of driving in NYC, I believe that traffic enforcement requires human interaction and a keen eye. "Traffic Cameras" and other automated measures have their role, but should not be heavily relied upon. Additionally, in regards to job creation and retention, I would rather employ a human, than a computerized camera.

All of this can be achieved with the current DOT resources and additional funding through Department of Buildings regulations for new construction.

2. Ensuring thorough investigation of, and appropriate consequences for, drivers who commit traffic offenses that result in injury or death.

The laws in this regard already exist. We need to make clear to all through the enforcement of the statutes already on the books, that reckless driving whether because of a lack of skill, distraction, fatigue, or altered state to drugs or alcohol will not be tolerated, and prosecuted to the strongest extent of the law.

My family and I have made provisions, so that my 85 year old mother, who is hard of hearing and suffers from slight mobility issues, does not cross streets of more than a single lane in each direction, alone. We find, that even on our seemingly quiet, tree lined street, there are too many speeding cars, motorized dirt bikes, and motorcycles to make us feel comfortable for my mother to go out for walks, necessary for her health and wellbeing, alone. That is a tragedy.

Complete Streets

2. Encouraging New Yorkers to use public transit, walk or bicycle within the city, instead of driving

According to recent research, NYC already has a low rate of vehicle ownership and a significant percentage of individuals who use public transportation. Therefore, although there is always room for improvement, it is one of the most energy efficient cities in the US. That being said, we need to further strengthen the infrastructure of public transportation in many areas of NYC. For many Queens County residents who live in areas known in the past as TWO FARE ZONES, it is often prohibitive to use public transit on a regular basis to commute to and from work. Not only is the distance and time involved often prohibitive, but in many cases the cost can be a barrier as well.

A member of my household (St. Albans Queens), works in Wakefield, Bronx. A 30 minute drive, becomes a 2.5 hour commute on days when driving isn't feasible.

We need to encourage shared vehicles, such as the Relay Rides and Zip Car model in all areas of New York City.

3. Repurposing street space to better meet transportation needs (please specify particular streets)
There should be designated on street, commuter parking along Dunkirk Avenue for St. Albans Station LIRR commuters.

There should be reduced fee parking in Jamaica center.

5. Increasing the amount of public space for non-transportation use, such as plazas and street closure programs (e.g., Summer Streets and play streets.)

NYC has several programs and options in place for the creative use of outdoor space such as the permits for street fairs, the use of public parks for carnivals, and sporadic closing of streets for play streets. Perhaps, to make the public spaces more attractive, we should bring the MUSIC UNDERGROUND program, which is currently exclusively in our subways, above ground to green spaces, and link the performers with venues who have sidewalk cafes, and or in areas designated for STREET FOOD TRUCKS to create mobile culinary hubs.

6. Harmonizing commercial and residential uses through licensing and regulation of trucking, deliveries, parking, street vending, greenmarkets, and other commercial activity affecting our streets

- ***I believe that non-essential deliveries should happen at night.***
- ***Those with elderly and/or handicapped family members should have easier access to special parking and “driving permits” to appropriately care for the needs of those family members.***
- ***Access a Ride should not be limited to the five boroughs, but cross into other municipalities for medical and other needs.***
- ***In high demand areas, resident parking permits should be employed so that homeowners and leaseholders can be assured of safe parking near their homes***
- ***The City of New York needs to reinvest in municipal parking in each borough located near transportation hubs to make commuting accessible for all***
- ***Greenmarkets should be placed in each borough, especially in areas which have been identified as “food drought communities” where there is limited or no access to fresh produce and where there is a proliferation of prepared food establishments***

h you to make our city a better place to live!