

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:

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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

In my district of northeast Queens, there is a great need for left turn signals and left turn lanes. Pedestrians who are lawfully crossing the street are killed and injured too often by vehicles making left turns and speeding through an intersection to avoid oncoming traffic. I believe more four way stops will decrease motor-vehicle crashes and I also favor speed cameras which will cause drivers to think twice before speeding. Finally, I am working with my local civic association to make my neighborhood a slow zoon. These policy initiatives are not expensive and can be financed within the current budget of the Department of Transportation. I will also be amendable to investigating the financing of these policy initiatives through increase taxes on the wealthiest New Yorkers and generating revenue streams from owners and drivers of motor vehicles.

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

There is a fundamental precept of a just society that there must be a through investigation of an appropriate consequences for drivers who commit traffic offenses that result in injury or death. All too often, there is no investigation of accidents that result in injury or death caused by sober drivers. The NYPD must be required to thoroughly investigate accidents that result in injury or death and drivers at fault must face appropriate consequences for their conduct.

Complete Streets

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

To encouraging New Yorkers to use public transit, walk or bicycle and discourage driving, I will fight in the City Council to keep the cost of public transit as low as possible. It is simply bad policy to raise the cost of public transportation when we should be encouraging people to use it for whole variety of reasons. The owners and operators of motor-vehicles and no the riders of public transportation should be called upon when the revenue is needed. Finally, New York City must invest in more bicycle lanes and paths within the city which will benefit bicyclists and pedestrians.

4. Repurposing street space to better meet transportation needs (please specify particular streets)

In northeast Queens, additional bike lanes would encourage people to ride their bikes to do local errands instead of driving their cars to do so. This will make bicycling safer and will reduce our City's carbon footprint. We should also take advantage of every roadwork opportunity to ensure that sidewalk space is adequate even at the expense of losing a lane of vehicular traffic in order to encourage people to walk instead of driving to their destinations.

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.)

Street closure programs enhance the quality of life in northeast Queens and the process for obtaining a permit for a street closing must be streamlined. Street fairs and block parties on streets close to the vehicular traffic enables neighbors to spend time with each other and greatly increases community unity and harmony.

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

In northeast Queens, it is absolutely essential that the City protects our residential neighborhoods through the licensing and regulation of trucking. The enforcement of trucking regulations must be strengthened to discourage heavy trucks from rumbling through residential neighborhoods when traffic on main thoroughfare is heavy. The street in Douglaston is home to a greenmarket on weekends in the summer and I would use my City Council office to protect that greenmarket and create other greenmarkets throughout northeast Queens.

YES/NO QUESTIONS

1. Do you believe speeding cars are a public safety problem in your district/borough?
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? **YES**
3. Has the New York Police done enough to enforce the traffic laws? **NO**
4. Do you support expanding Bus Rapid Transit with dedicated bus lanes in your district/borough? **YES**
5. Should New York City government be providing economic support for ferry service as an extension of the public transit network? **YES**
6. Do you support continued expansion of the on-grid bike lane network in all five boroughs? **YES**
7. Do you approve of the way that the NYC Department of Transportation is working to manage traffic? **YES**
8. Do you approve of the process the NYC Department of Transportation and the Community Boards use to determine locations for bike-share facilities? **YES**
9. Do you support channeling buses and trucks to perimeter highways in order to reduce their presence on residential streets? **YES**

10. Do you support closing New York City's parks to cars? **YES**
11. Do you support pedestrianization of street space to encourage tourism? **YES**
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? **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? **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. 3 Remove financial incentives for "toll shopping" by equalizing or balancing tolls at different bridge and tunnel crossings
 - B. 2 Use a system of dynamic pricing for access to the most congested areas
 - C. 4 Give buses and vehicles-for-hire priority over private cars on city streets
 - D. 5 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:

Northeast Queens is a mass transit desert. In order to reduce unnecessary motor vehicle trips to the high-traffic areas of the city, we need to invest in better public transportation options including additional bus routes and expanded express bus service.

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. 2 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. 4 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. 5 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:

There is nothing more important than obtaining community input concerning changes in the regulation or configuration of a street. Therefore, I will use my City Council office to ensure that a face-2-face canvas of residents and businesses on the affected street is performed, even by my staff, if necessary. I will also make sure that the results of that canvas are made public and dictate the street changes.

3. Rank the traffic violations upon which NYPD resources should be focused (1 = most important, 5 = least important):
- A. 1 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. 2 Failure to yield to pedestrians

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

As an avid bicycle rider, I believe it is incumbent upon the NYPD to ticket operators of motor vehicles who operate unsafely around bicyclists and pedestrians. In my district in Northeast Queens, bicyclists must share the roads with motor vehicles and bicycling will not be safe until the NYPD aggressively enforces the laws with respect to reckless driving which threatens pedestrians and people riding their bikes.

Thank you for completing the StreetsPAC 2013 Candidate Questionnaire.

We look forward to working with you to make our city a better place to live!