

# CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE



## INTRODUCTION

Name: [James F. Kenney](#)

Seeking The Office Of: [Mayor](#)

Political Party Affiliation: [Democrat](#)

Campaign Website and/or Facebook page: [Kenney2015.com](#)

## YES OR NO

For each question below please indicate whether you agree or disagree. You may comment to elaborate on your response. (optional)

### VISION ZERO

Do you support funding a Vision Zero approach for pedestrian & cycling safety citywide?

- YES  
 NO

Shortly after taking office in January 2016, I will bring together stakeholders from the state and City government, advocacy groups, and community members to create a Vision Zero Task Force. This group will develop an action plan similar to what was most recently done by Mayor de Blasio in New York City. Several of the recommendations made by the New York City committee would also make sense in Philadelphia, specifically: automated speed cameras, reduced speed limits, specific “slow zones” across the City in designated danger areas and better street engineering to reduce travel speeds. Some of this will require authorization from Harrisburg, but there are things we can do in Philadelphia now to improve conditions. Additional dedicated pedestrian crossings with no vehicle traffic, dedicated traffic turn signals, improved street marking and turn lanes, and better timed traffic signals to start. I will also work to add more bike lanes, and to have protected bikes lanes wherever possible.

Would you support enhancing penalties for aggressive, distracted and reckless driving, including speeding and DUI, in order to reduce road safety deaths and injuries?

- YES  
 NO

While many of these penalties are set by the state legislature, I support both enhanced penalties and more stringent enforcement.

**Candidate, please initial each page and sign last page.**

## The 5th Square PAC

Should the Philadelphia Police Department do more to enforce existing traffic laws?

YES

In my administration, police will take a more proactive role in enforcing traffic laws. With the use of additional automated systems, and targeted police enforcement in high speed and dangerous areas, I believe we can significantly reduce traffic fatalities as part of a Vision Zero plan.

NO

Do you support the use of traffic calming devices, such as curb bump-outs, chicanes, speed bumps or garden medians?

YES

My administration will absolutely review all of these traffic-calming devices to determine where they should be implemented. All of these options, along with more pedestrian safety islands, will be studied to determine greatest benefit on specific streets.

NO

Would you find room in the budget for additional Streets Department traffic calming devices?

YES

I will institute Zero Based Budgeting, which has been extremely successful in Montgomery County at both saving money, and maximizing existing funds to support best practices and successful programs. I believe that through this process I will be able to increase the Street Department budget for additional traffic calming opportunities.

NO

## TRAFFIC PLANNING

Do you support giving buses priority over private cars on city streets?

YES

This has proven successful on several city streets during rush hour, but it can certainly be expanded throughout the City

NO

Do you support the installation of 30-minute loading zones on all blocks with high residential density and/or commercial activity?

YES

Installing loading zones on residential blocks will have several benefits, including reduced double-parking and increased access to bike lanes for bikers. However, given that implementing such zones would significantly decrease the availability of parking for residents on those blocks, implementation would have to be on a case-by-case basis.

NO

Mayor Nutter created MOTU (Mayor's Office of Transportation and Utilities) in his first administration. Do you support continuing the overall mission of MOTU in the next 4 years?

YES

MOTU has been great at organizing and responding to the multi-modal transportation options throughout the City, and I will keep the office in my administration.

NO

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Do you support restricting commercial deliveries to late night and early morning hours, and banning the largest trucks from residential neighborhoods absent compliance with special permit and insurance requirements?

- YES  
 NO

There is a careful balance that must be struck in restricting commercial deliveries between reducing traffic congestion and respecting residents who will be affected by increased overnight traffic noise. I would be interested in developing a pilot program for implementation early in my term.

Philadelphia used to repave streets every 9 years. It now repaves every 15 years. Overall, the city has a 900 mile backlog of streets needing to be repaved. Do you support doubling the funding levels for Streets Department's paving budget by fiscal year 2017?

- YES  
 NO

Fiscal Year 2017 will be my first budget. While I am committed to increasing the funds for paving, departmental unknowns between the School District and other issues make it imprudent to promise specific increases to any part of the budget, including the paving budget, that first year.

Do you believe that universities, colleges and large non-profits should be encouraged to subsidize the cost of public transit for students, staff, administration, etc.?

- YES  
 NO

This is a great opportunity to stress alternatives to car transportation, and allow for these institutions to cut down on their vehicle parking lots, so that space can be turned into community green space, or other uses.

## OPEN DATA

Should the City Revenue Department release as much of its records as legally possible for independent analysis and overall transparency?

- YES  
 NO

My administration will continue the Open Data Executive Order, with a directive to make as much data available as legally and technologically possible. This presents a real opportunity to capitalize on Philadelphia's tech community to become civic innovators and make recommendations to government on how to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

Should the city make all data concerning street use, street conditions and traffic crash investigations available in a timely, digital format to the public?

- YES  
 NO

Ideally this would be part of the overall open data process.

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## BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE

Protected bike lanes on JFK and Market were piloted and found to be minimally disruptive to drivers in 2011. Will you support funding the installation of these protected bike lanes if elected?

- YES  
 NO

I am committed to providing 30 miles of protected bike lanes over the next five years.

Do you believe that bike-friendly infrastructure is economically beneficial to a community's commercial corridors & cities at large?

- YES  
 NO

City streets and sidewalks, and especially those on commercial corridors which generate so much neighborhood commerce, must be accessible to everyone.

## ZONING & LAND USE

Do you support raising millage rates on the land portion of the property tax, and lowering millage rates on improvements to the structure?

- YES  
 NO

I am interested in exploring the idea of a Land Value Tax as described, but would first like to get a full sense of the actual land values of property across the City. I believe that land has been vastly undervalued as part of the Actual Value Initiative, and I will direct the Office of Property Assessment to do a full re-evaluation of land values, to specifically ensure that speculators and recipients of the real estate tax abatement are paying their fair share.

Do you support revising the zoning code to remove minimum accessory parking requirements?

- YES  
 NO

The new zoning code has improved Philadelphia's development landscape substantially, but obviously more can be done. As more Philadelphians are becoming "car-free" and choosing other modes of transportation, these requirements can be lessened or removed completely.

## PUBLIC SPACE PLANNING

Would you support pedestrianization of street space that may currently be used for parking or vehicle transit?

- YES  
 NO

The institution of parklets has been a great success, and I will continue and expand that program as Mayor. The pedestrian plaza at Grays Ferry and South Street is a great example of how to activate underutilized street space for the benefit of the community.

## The 5th Square PAC

Is regularly scheduled street sweeping of Philadelphia's streets more important than preserving the convenience of residents who prefer not moving their vehicles?

YES

NO

It is more important, but the existence of on-street parking does complicate the situation. I served on City Council with former Councilman Frank DiCicco when we tried to institute regular street sweeping in the early 2000's, and the backlash from residents that effectively shut down the program. I would like to move forward with a street sweeping program again, and agree that cleanliness is more important than on-street parking.

The current cost for an annual parking permit for car owners to store their private vehicle on public streets is \$35. Do you think this price point should be revisited?

YES

NO

All parking permit fees along with meter parking fees should be revisited on a regular basis.

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## OPEN RESPONSE

For each question below please answer using the provided space. Detail is appreciated.

### VISION ZERO

What is an appropriate legal speed limit on a neighborhood street in Philadelphia? On an arterial street? What are some policies and/or physical alterations that can be implemented to help ensure drivers obey speed limits and other traffic laws?

Philadelphia streets, except for portions of the far northeast and northwest, are extremely narrow and densely populated with rowhomes. This narrowness helps to slow down some drivers, but lower limits could also help. Under Title 75 our speed limits are in most circumstances 25mph now, and I would like to see that limit lowered to 20mph on most neighborhood streets. For arterial streets within the city, I believe a maximum of 25-35mph is acceptable, but that will depend on a number of factors including, the condition of the street, how many driving lanes, how many traffic signals, and the conditions for bicycle and bus traffic."

I would like to investigate multiple traffic-calming methods for implementation in Philadelphia. The use of chicanes to bend and shape roads to slow down drivers has been used in San Antonio and Austin. The Philadelphia Complete Streets guide also contains suggestions on the use of medians, curbcuts, and raised speed reducers, or speed bumps, to calm traffic in the roadway. I will also increase the use of red-light cameras at significant intersections, and work with the General Assembly to allow the use of speed-cameras on our most dangerous roads, like Roosevelt Boulevard. I would also like to use curb extensions at the intersections of multiple streets, like on East Passyunk Avenue for instance. These have been identified by the leftover, virtually untouched snow in the street, and the area could easily be transformed into a curbed area as a refuge for pedestrians and as a way to reduce speed.

## The 5th Square PAC

# ZONING & LAND USE

What kinds of zoning and land use policies can best help our neighborhood commercial corridors and small businesses?

Fostering development on our commercial corridors is a significant portion of my overall neighborhood economic development platform. In the 1990s and 2000s I was involved in the redevelopment of East Passyunk Avenue in South Philadelphia, and I believe that streets like this can be redeveloped across Philadelphia. As Mayor, I will work with Community Development Corporations and Business Improvement District managers to direct City investment into these businesses and properties. The ground-level commercial properties present a great opportunity to develop affordable housing on the 2nd and 3rd floors of these properties. Through low-interest loans from the City directly, or from a community bank or credit union supported by the City, the business can improve their portion, and improve the above floors with an agreement they keep rents affordable. This improves the high levels of vacancy on commercial corridors that can inhibit overall growth and appearance."

I will also expand the Community Life Improvement Program (CLIP), which currently has authority to enforce the Property Maintenance Code in some sections of the city. CLIP also handles graffiti abatement and vacant lot cleaning throughout the city. In my administration, CLIP will work directly with the commercial corridors to attack the blight and vacancy, hold speculating property-owners accountable for their failure to make necessary repairs, and also assist in the overall cleanliness of the street. This is an investment that will pay for itself over a short period of time, as new business open and more corridors improve.

# PARKS & GREENSPACES

Do you support increasing funding for Parks & Recreation throughout the city as a means to improving public health and the economy? If so, how would you better fund our parks? If not, why not?

Yes, I support increasing funding for Parks and Recreation. Philadelphia's park system needs additional care and our recreation centers and playgrounds are always in need of improvement. I also believe that neighborhood green space is vital, and I will work to create more by capitalizing on the city-owned vacant land."

Through the use of zero-based budgeting I believe that additional funds can be found to both make Parks and Rec better and more efficient. Programs that are successful will be expanded, while other programming that doesn't have a great an impact will be ended and those funds used to address the better programs. I also believe we should pursue opportunities for private sponsorship of parks and programming to provide additional revenue for upkeep. For instance, Philadelphia parks do not have recycling receptacles. We could place recycling receptacles throughout the park system with advertising for reputable companies so that program does not cost the City additional funds. While we must stretch out city budget as best we can, we should look to the private and nonprofit world for assistance to improve.

# STREET TREES

At 16% of total land area, Philadelphia has one of the lowest tree canopy percentages among large U.S. cities. Comparable cities exceed 30%. Do you believe Philly needs to increase this percentage? If so, how? Please be specific about how you would fund this.

This is already a goal of the Greenworks plan, and I completely support the effort to reach 30% canopy coverage by 2025. Recent studies have found that we might have a little bit a larger coverage than you mention in the question (20% according to 2011 US Forest Service Study), but regardless we have room for improvement, specifically in the most dense areas of the city with little to no tree coverage. I believe that capitalizing on the vacant land that is either city-owned, or soon to be city-owned due to tax delinquency, we can plan additional trees in neighborhoods that otherwise wouldn't have access. The TreePhilly program has also done a great job, specifically through its yard-tree initiative. Because of the limited nature of the Philadelphia city budget, I believe that increasing this funding is best to come from private and non-profit organizations, like the \$75,000 grant from Wells Fargo that helped launch the program. My administration will scour private, nonprofit, state, and federal grants to better fund this program and meet our foal of 30% coverage.

### PUBLIC SPACE

What is your position about vehicles parked on the City Hall apron/sidewalk?

I have some strong feelings on vehicles parking on the City Hall sidewalk, as you might imagine. I introduced legislation in December 2014 to end the practice, and as Mayor, I will not permit vehicle parking there. This area is for the public. With the revitalization of Dilworth Park, it creates an opportunity to completely reshape how we look at City Hall's public space. My administration will look to open up the public space on the first floor of city hall for more public uses, and possibly for shopping and commercial space. New York City recently reinvented their marriage license bureau into a terrific tourist destination that is much more inviting than the drab current situation for people looking to get married in City Hall's 4th floor. Government must stop thinking about City Hall as solely the space of government, and start thinking about it as a space for people who government represents. My administration will do that.

### BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE

What is your position in regards to creating an integrated protected bike lane network throughout the city of Philadelphia? Are there areas in the city that you believe should be addressed first?

I believe that we must develop new bike lanes, and create protected bike lanes as well. I believe we have an opportunity to turn some of our buffered bike lanes into actual protected bike lanes, and larger travel streets like JFK Boulevard and Market Street present opportunities to install protected bike lanes. Some Councilmembers, such as Bobby Henon, have expressed interest in protected bike lanes in their districts to expand the use into neighborhoods that may not contain as many bike lanes as Center City. My administration will also study those streets that contain most frequent bicycle/vehicle conflict or accidents, and implement protected lanes there. We should take a data-centric approach to prioritizing areas of the city specifically focusing on our three major employment hubs, as identified by the Center City District - University City, the Navy Yard and Center City. According to CCD, almost 60% of all jobs in the City are in these three geographic locations. Making sure that we provide residents and commuters with a safe bike route to work should be a priority. Connecting densely populated neighborhoods to our core employment centers should be a top priority.

We also need our bike lanes to be a true network, not disjointed routes that require bikers to veer in and out of traffic lanes. Much like smart bus routes, we need to create logical and realistic paths for bikers to traverse the city without leaving bike lanes. My administration will encourage intelligent growth of our bike lanes

### TRASH & LITTER

Philadelphia provides municipal trash service to residences, but businesses are left to contract with private vendors, resulting in multiple large dumpsters in the public realm (e.g., alleyways). Do you think the City should change this current trash collection strategy? If so, how?

I believe the current licensing and fees for dumpsters has improved both conditions and maintenance substantially, and it has helped the city crackdown on illegal dumpsters taking up space in the right-of-way. I believe the City can and should be more vigilant in enforcing the dumpster regulations, and also ensure that sidewalks are not impeded for pedestrians. We must take a carrot and stick approach, ramping up strict enforcement of our dumpster laws, but also working to incentivize businesses to find ways to get these dumpsters out of the right-of-way. Working with all stakeholders, my administration would explore ways to make commercial trash pick-up more effective.

I believe that we can and should be doing more however to reduce overall refuse created and entering landfills. The move to single-stream recycling was an important step, but far too few Philadelphians are still recycling on a weekly basis. This is an educational challenge that must start in school, and the importance of recycling and composting should be taught at an early age.

# TRAFFIC PLANNING

Should City Council be the approving body for traffic alterations to Philadelphia's citywide street network, e.g. removal of a traffic lane, turning lane, parking lane, etc.? Or should this be determined by the Streets Department, MOTU, PennDOT and other street-related agencies?

Ideally, no, City Council should not be the approving body for these changes, and approval should lie with the administration. I believe that District Councilmembers are an important piece of the puzzle, and should be consulted and involved in the process as the representatives of the communities involved. Those with expertise, such as the Streets Department or PennDot should be the ones ultimately making these decisions after study and planning.

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# BLOG INVITATION

We invite you as a candidate for political office to reach out to the voters of Philadelphia by speaking to them directly. We will host your thoughts on one of the following 9 topics below if you so choose. Please choose one topic and detail 3-5 policy changes you would make to achieve this goal.

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
3. Encouraging Philadelphians 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)
5. Making land assessments accurate, and keeping them accurate
6. Increasing the amount of public space for non-transportation use, such as plazas and street closure programs (e.g., open streets and play streets.)
7. Expanding the on-street bike network in the most heavily-biked areas
8. Investing in walking and biking infrastructure outside of Center City
9. Getting our most popular bus and trolley lines out of congested mixed traffic



# The 5th Square PAC

## Topic 5:

The implementation of the Actual Value Initiative was an important step in bringing Philadelphia's property valuations into the 21st century. As part of the AVI process however, the city did not undertake a thorough review of the land values of properties. Instead, properties have just been assessed at their market or near-market value, and land was made a small portion of that value, usually from 10% - 20%. This has led to some land being vastly under-assessed, specifically in Center City, and has given a significant break to recipients of the Real Estate Tax Abatement who only pay taxes on the land value. The most significant break however has fallen to land speculators, who are sitting and waiting for the next real estate bubble, or for a developer to approach with a plan to redevelop property the speculator has been sitting on for decades.

In order to fix this situation, my administration will conduct a full review of land values across the city, with a specific focus on abated properties and vacant land. This reevaluation will raise land value, and increase city revenue from these parcels. The revaluation of land values on all other properties should keep total assessments flat, and not increase property taxes for the vast majority of Philadelphians. Once the reevaluation is complete, my administration will look to adjust the ratio at which land and improvements are taxed so the higher burden falls on the land portion. This tax structure has been known to promote density, and specifically disincentivize speculators sitting on valuable parcels for many, many years.

In order to keep these assessment accurate, they must be reassessed regularly. Best practices from other cities call for reassessments yearly, or at least every two to three years. The city is currently set to conduct its first post AVI full reassessment next year. My administration will follow this with annual or biennial reassessment of the full value, and land value at the same time.

Candidate Signature:

# THE 5<sup>th</sup> SQUARE