

CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE



INTRODUCTION

Name: Paul Steinke

Seeking The Office Of: City Council At-Large

Political Party Affiliation: Democrat

Campaign Website and/or Facebook page: www.PaulSteinke.com // Facebook.com/Steinke2015

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 As a lifelong Philadelphian, a regular public transportation commuter, and an occasional bicyclist, I recognize that we need to re-balance the interests of automobiles, bicyclists and pedestrians in the public environment to accommodate and ensure the safety of all. As a founding executive of the Center City District and first executive director of the University City District, I played an active role in making streets more pedestrian friendly, and I plan to continue that work in City Council to improve conditions for pedestrians throughout all Philadelphia neighborhoods.
- NO

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

Candidate, please initial each page and sign last page.

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

- YES
 NO

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

- YES
 NO

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

- YES Even though so many priorities compete for the city's limited resources, I will try hard to find additional resources for the Streets Department. I advocate adopting a zero-based budgeting approach to make sure that every dollar spent by the department is devoted to achieving the department's mission.
 NO

TRAFFIC PLANNING

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

- YES Better enforcement of existing bus-only lanes, especially during rush hours, is necessary to make sure they work as intended. Additionally, I favor giving transit vehicles traffic signal pre-emption.
 NO

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

- YES Loading zones on residential blocks can mitigate double-parking and reduce the amount of time that motorists block bike lanes. I generally support this, but I would advocate implementing it on a trial basis to gauge the impact on neighborhoods already experiencing tight parking supply.
 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
 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 New York's "Off-Hour Delivery" has proven highly successful and has saved hundreds of millions of dollars per year by reducing traffic congestion and fuel consumption. It also improves air quality and overall quality of life for city residents and should be piloted in Philadelphia.
- NO

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 Currently, the Federal mandate to create curb cuts for wheelchair accessibility takes up about 65% of the Streets Department's paving budget. This is clearly not an ideal situation and the condition of our streets proves it. As the requirement to create new curb cuts subsides, there ought to be funding freed up in the paving budget to reduce the backlog. The budget for Fiscal Year 2017 will be the first budget I am able to address as Councilman. Given all of the needs of the City, particularly our schools, I cannot make any ironclad guarantees about specific budget increases for any Department or function. That said, better maintenance of our streets is an important priority, and I will seek to increase funding for it as much as I can.
- NO

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

OPEN DATA

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

- YES
- NO

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 Any public data that isn't protected by privilege or confidentiality should be released to benefit future planning.
- NO

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

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

- YES Improving bicycle access in commercial corridors will only add another group of regular customers and is smart public policy.
 NO

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 The land portion of our city's property tax is too low which encourages speculation and keeping land vacant. The City of Pittsburgh collects more from its land than from improvements, which encourages development and appropriately prices land based on proximity.
 NO

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

- YES
 NO

PUBLIC SPACE PLANNING

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

- YES The introduction of "parklets" around the city has been hugely successful, and I would advocate for more of them. Re-purposing parking spaces for bicycle parking has also proven popular. Steps like these improve the city's multi-modality and should be encouraged while striking an appropriate balance with the needs of motorists.
 NO

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

- YES Philadelphia has come a long way since the days of "Filthadelphia." That said, too many neighborhoods still struggle with trash and litter. Our city is virtually alone in the East without regular weekly street cleaning. I would make finding a way to institute this service a priority of my council office.
- NO

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

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?

The speed limit on secondary roads should be set at 25 mph. Lower speed limits are definitely appropriate in dense residential neighborhoods. To encourage drivers obey speed limits, we should look to increase the number of streets with timed lights, which reward drivers for maintaining appropriate speeds. We should also increase enforcement of all traffic safety laws to help deter unsafe driving. Adding red light cameras will help curb dangerous driving as well.

ZONING & LAND USE

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

The most important thing we can do is to make our zoning process more transparent. We need to complete the reform of our zoning code and eliminate the abuse of councilmanic prerogative. Purchasing and developing property needs to be an open, transparent process for everyone, not just those with personal connections to City Hall.

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?

More city funding is the ideal solution, and as councilman, I will fight to ensure that the Department of Parks and Recreation's budget is increased to meet its needs; we are blessed with one of the largest urban parks in America, and we need to allocate funding accordingly.

I am a firm believer that city taxpayer funding shouldn't be the only way we try to find resources for our city Departments. I will work with Parks and Recreation to locate state, federal, nonprofit, and even for-profit funding resources to help complement the funding that the Department receives from the City.

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.

A denser tree canopy is desirable for both aesthetic and environmental reasons. I believe Philadelphia should proactively work to increase its street tree canopy percentage. This could be achieved in part from the city's budget if economic growth allows. It can also be achieved in partnership with non-profit organizations like the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and the Fairmount Park Conservancy; with park friends groups throughout the city; and by maximizing local and national grant funding opportunities.

PUBLIC SPACE

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

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?

Where street capacity can be made to accommodate it, integrated, protected bike lanes are a great way to promote bike commuting – helping to reduce traffic – and enhancing road safety. We should prioritize two areas. First are major commuter corridors, to make it safer and more convenient for workers to commute to and from their workplaces by bike. Part of this effort should be to expand our network of bike lanes so that cyclists can get from one place to another without constantly switching between streets that have bike lanes to those that don't. The second area to prioritize is roads that connect major visitor attractions. When tourists visit Philadelphia, they should be able to get around the city easily by walking, biking, or using public transportation.

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?

Requiring large residential buildings to privately contract for their trash hauling is necessary given the city's overall budget constraints. To mitigate the impact of unsightly dumpsters in the public environment, the city should work with businesses, CDCs, BIDs and community organizations to find creative ways to hide dumpsters behind attractive barriers and store them in less visible areas

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?

Traffic engineering decisions like these should generally be left in the hands of professionals in the Streets Department, MOTU and PennDOT. However, there should always be room for public input on these decisions, communicated through elected officials, to advocate for changes and improvements in the transportation system.

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

Candidate Signature:



THE 5th SQUARE