

Councilman Kenyatta Johnson
Second Council District

The 5th Square PAC CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

VISION ZERO

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

YES

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

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

YES

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

YES, during my first term in office, we've seen several traffic calming measures implemented in the 2nd Council District. Significant pedestrian safety measures were implemented on Passyunk Ave. These measures included curb bump-outs at intersections, which reduced the time pedestrians spend in the intersections. I negotiated for a commitment from Children's Hospital of Philadelphia to include several traffic calming measures along Schuylkill Avenue in its campus being constructed next to the South Street Bridge. CHOP has committed to include speed humps, a raised, integrated crosswalk which includes a narrowed traffic lane, and an additional stop sign. This will greatly reduce the speed of cars traveling on Schuylkill Ave. I am also working with the Girard Estate community to address pedestrian safety issues caused by through-traffic from the large retail locations on west Oregon Ave. I am also currently working the community stakeholders, the police, the Streets Dept., the Planning Commission, and the Parking Authority to increase enforcement on Washington Ave. and work on ways to increase pedestrian and bicyclist safety.

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

YES

TRAFFIC PLANNING

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

YES

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

I support high parking turnover on dense commercial and residential streets, but details matter, so I would need more information regarding what constitutes high density on these corridors.

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, I have worked alongside MOTU on several crucial issues over the past 3 years. MOTU is a valuable office that should be made permanent.

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

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?

I support increased funding for the paving budget, but my number one priority is adequately funding education. Assuming that our schools are fully funded, I support spending more on paving.

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, this will get more cars off the streets and increase revenue for public transit, which will reduce wear and tear on our streets and provide more resources for our public transit companies to invest in their infrastructure.

OPEN DATA

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

YES, particularly all information related to property assessment determinations.

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.

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

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

YES, studies show that bicyclists spend more money on commercial corridors than drivers. By attracting more cyclists with bicycle friendly infrastructure, we help businesses on our commercial corridors.

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, Council has pushed OPA to correct the assessment system which has severely undervalued land throughout the city, especially in neighborhoods around center city. OPA has indicated that it is currently working on this and will implement these changes next year.

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

That depends on the particular zoning designation. People are driving less, and large mixed use developments are often built with far more parking than is needed, but certain business corridors rely on a level of parking for survival. I commit to review each designation with advocates to ensure that we are not including unnecessary minimum accessory parking requirements.

PUBLIC SPACE PLANNING

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

YES, I advocated for the approval of the Grays Ferry Triangle Park, which transformed a segment of street and parking into a pedestrian plaza. The feedback has been extraordinarily positive, so I look forward to locating other areas we can turn into pedestrian space.

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

YES

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, but in many neighborhoods in the 2nd District, poverty is pervasive, so \$35 is a big expense. With that said, I am willing to revisit the price with an open mind.

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?

On neighborhood streets, vehicles should not be traveling faster than 20 miles per hour. On arterial streets, vehicles should not travel faster than 30 mph. Vision Zero statistics show that the vast majority of pedestrians struck by vehicles going no more than 20 mph will survive. The exact opposite is true for pedestrians struck by vehicles going 40 mph. Drivers do not need to go faster than 20 mph on small streets or 30 mph on larger streets.

What are some policies and/or physical alterations that can be implemented to help ensure drivers obey speed limits and other traffic laws?

More red light cameras and a commitment to enforcing traffic laws will continue to increase compliance with the law. Traffic calming measures will also help. I am currently working with stakeholders and city agencies to plan a traffic lane reduction on a 1.2-mile expanse of 25th St. under the viaduct rail bridge. My goal is to transform the two center travel lanes into a fully buffered bike lane with green infrastructure. This plan will improve bicyclist safety by providing a protected bike lane and improve pedestrian by slowing traffic and forcing cars to travel at or below the speed limit.

ZONING & LAND USE

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

Zoning designations that allow for increased density will help our businesses and commercial corridors. I am currently advocating for amendments to the Center City Overlay which will extend the boundaries south to Washington Avenue and provide for increased height and density in several circumstances. These amendments will allow for increased residential density and height on several larger intersections and allow for more units in multi-family dwellings.

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, parks provide a positive outlet for our young people. During my first term I've invested over \$3 million in parks and recreation centers in the 2nd Council District. We need to provide more funding for our parks and recreation centers by increasing our annual commitment during the budget process.

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.

Yes. We need to continue the Green Cities Clean Waters 25-year plan to drastically increase green space in the city of Philadelphia. Storm water management fees have provided incentives for large property owners to provide green space and trees. We should also consider requiring trees in certain designations of our zoning code.

PUBLIC SPACE

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

No one should park on the City Hall apron or 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?

I support this. I am currently working on a plan to create a protected bike lane under 1.2 miles of the 25th Street Viaduct.

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?

The city should shift to a system that requires businesses to keep dumpsters inside of businesses, if possible.

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?

For relatively minor changes that implicate technical decisions, the executive branch of government should be the determining body. This will take these decisions out of the legislature's hands so that Council can focus on larger policies. The legislative branch is the appropriate decision making body for large scale policy decisions that impact the wider public, because these decisions should be reflections of the public's will.

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

Pedestrian- and bicyclist-friendly infrastructure should not be limited to the areas immediately surrounding Center City. Every neighborhood in Philadelphia should benefit from infrastructure improvements that make biking and walking in Philadelphia safer. We can ensure this by implementing a few policy measures.

First, we should maintain the policies that the Nutter Administration has implemented to promote these types of infrastructure investments. Through the Mayor's Office of Transportation and Public Utilities (MOTU), the Nutter Administration has created a process through which residents and community groups can transform streets and parking spaces into pedestrian plazas. The system originally required almost 100% support from businesses and neighbors in order to establish pedestrian plazas on a temporary basis. The rules have been changed to make the requirements more realistic so that these smart improvements are not held hostage by one or two businesses or

neighbors who object. We must continue to refine this process so that it allows progressive neighbors to advocate for smart infrastructure investments.

We witnessed the benefits of bike and pedestrian friendly infrastructure last year when I supported the implementation of the Grays Ferry Triangle Park at 23th and South Streets. An underused street and several parking spaces were transformed into a multi-use pedestrian plaza with seats and planters and the recent addition of a Philly Bike Share Location. I am currently using this location as a model for other locations in the 2nd Council District. Currently, we are working to implement similar investments on Point Breeze Avenue and Woodland Avenue in Southwest Philadelphia.

Second, we should leverage existing infrastructure and planned infrastructure investments to add bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly improvements throughout the city. Whenever a large project is planned, we should encourage the inclusion of bicycle- and pedestrian-focused investments by the city of Philadelphia. I worked to push CSX to commit to a multi-year, multi-million dollar revitalization plan for the 25th Street Viaduct. I am currently working to leverage this commitment to secure a substantial city investment in the streetscape under the 1.2-mile bridge, which will include lane reductions and significant city investment in a protected bike lane which incorporates green storm water infrastructure.

Third, we need to connect all of our neighborhoods to center city via bike trails. We must ensure that the Schuylkill River Trail extends across the river into Southwest Philadelphia within the next several years. This is critical in order to provide an often-neglected community with easy pedestrian and bicycle access to center city.

9. Getting our most popular bus and trolley lines out of congested mixed traffic