



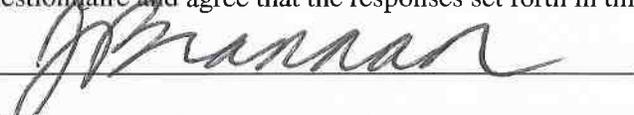
2017 City Council Candidate Questionnaire

Completed questionnaires will be public documents available on our website, so put your best foot forward. If we ultimately hold an endorsement vote in your race, your questionnaire will be circulated to our membership before the vote.

Name	Justin Brannan
Council District number and neighborhoods represented	Council District 43, representing the neighborhoods of Bay Ridge, Dyker Heights, Bath Beach and Bensonhurst
How long have you lived in the above district?	I was born and raised in the district
Preferred campaign contact information: name, email address, phone number	[REDACTED]
Why do you want to serve as a member of the NYC Council?	I believe government should first and foremost be a tool to advance equity. Since becoming an activist, I have been committed to making people's lives easier. There were many times a friend or neighbor would complain about an inconvenience in the neighborhood, like a pothole or a dangerous street, and the process would be a never-ending cycle of bureaucracy. It wasn't until later I realized I could be part of the solution in city government. Once I began working for the city I made a commitment to make the confusing networks of calls and paperwork easier on constituents and to help them change their communities by navigating the hard stuff for them.
What have you accomplished in public life that you are most proud of?	I am most proud of the safer streets and more responsive governmental office that Vincent Gentile and I created together. It has been a privilege to serve District 43 and I would continue that work as their voice in the City Council.
What are the greatest strengths and struggles of your council district?	The greatest strength of our district is what a strong community we have created. I've always said our community is its own small town in one of the biggest cities in the world. To keep this feeling and keep our community unified we must adapt to the many changes our district is going through. We must increase access to public transit by improving train service and expanding bus service, make sure our schools are getting the resources they need and deserve, stand up to budget cuts that take away many of our progressive programs that helps immigrants and their families move into the neighborhood and we must address health care access throughout the district.
Why do you want New Kings Democrats' endorsement?	NKD is a successful example of the ways groups of people can transform our politics and give a diverse array of issues a voice. My club, the Bay Ridge Dems, is a kindred spirit to NKD. Brooklyn has many clubs and organizations representing important issues, but few that give people a powerful singular platform to push a full progressive agenda.
If elected, what will your top three legislative and budgetary priorities be while in office?	I will prioritize spending on education, particularly after school programs and building news schools, improving access to mass transit, and making sure money goes to our local small businesses to make sure they thrive and stay competitive.
What is one thing you would do while in office to make New York City government more transparent, accountable, or inclusive?	As chief of staff for CM Gentile I have made it a priority to maintain a transparent and communicative office. As City Council Member, I will create an accountability system of changes throughout the district so you know every quarter that I'm working for you and you can see the changes that we have brought to District 43 through online reports of progress in the district like new roads and street signs, job postings and upcoming events to make sure everyone has access to what is changing and future plans.
In what ways would you like to expand voting access, and how can you do this as a member of the NYC Council?	Once elected to the City Council I will make it a priority that constituents in my district have an easy time registering to vote. We need early voting, shorter waiting time to switch parties and consolidated primaries. We need to make it easier for people to vote, not harder and not more confusing.

What criminal justice reforms would you like to see the Council implement?	I would like to see the city close Rikers Island and prioritize sending children to closer juvenile facilities so they can maintain visiting with relatives. Troubled youth who have more contact with their families have proven lower recidivism levels and less trouble staying out of prison as adults.
Do you support the Right to Know Act?	Yes. Citizens who are under arrest face a frightening and often uncertain consequence of their arrest. For citizens who aren't aware of their rights, this would give them the tools to express concerns in the interim when they haven't been charged with a crime.
Will you be participating in the NYC Matching Funds program?	Yes. As a candidate with the highest number of small donations, second only to Mayor de Blasio, I have qualified for matching funds and will participate in the program. The matching funds program allows community activists to run for office and gets the corrupting influence of big money out of the process. I wouldn't feel comfortable calling myself a progressive if I didn't participate in the program.
NKD supports holding a New York State Constitutional Convention. Do you? Why or why not?	No. While I support governmental changes to accommodate new policies and adapt to changing times, a Constitutional Convention could roll back hard fought rights like the right to collectively bargain and organize a union or the right to marry whom you choose. There is a process in place to make amendments to the constitution without resorting to electing delegates based on gerrymandered senate district lines or opening up all the progress we've made to being undone or rolled back.
What is your vision for the Brooklyn Democratic Party?	I would like to see Brooklyn Democratic Party be a unified force for reform and good in the City Council. Not only do I want to see more emphasis on defeating Republicans in Southern Brooklyn!, but I want all Democratic officials to share our Democratic and democratic ideals.
What funds have you raised for this campaign? What are the major sources of your campaign funds?	As of the latest filing I have raised \$99,686 from 680 contributors—almost entirely from voters in the 43 rd District. The average donation to my campaign is \$140.
What endorsements have you received from publications, electeds, community leaders, or political organizations?	Working Families Party, Bay Ridge Democrats, SEIU 32BJ, Democratic District Leader Joanne Seminara. We expect to announce many more endorsements from elected officials, labor unions and local community leaders and activists soon.
Of the other people who hold the office you're running for, who do you admire most and why?	I'm inspired by Council Member Antonio Reynoso for standing up to the machine successfully and taking out a corrupt politician who stood against everything we as progressives and reformers hold dear. And since being elected, Antonio has been a steadfast advocate for his constituents, making tough choices that aren't always popular, but that are always in line with his ideals.
What are some of the ways you think New York City residents can best participate in civic life?	Residents must go to their community board meetings, get involved in clubs, start issue groups and do what they love. As civil servants, it's our job to make all types of engagement as easy as possible to pursue.
What is one fun fact about you?	I was in a few hardcore bands that travelled around the world. My lyrics made front page news when a war photographer took a photo of them tattooed on a wounded vet.

I have reviewed this questionnaire and agree that the responses set forth in this document are accurate:

Candidate Signature: 

Date: 5/17/17

You must sign this questionnaire! When complete, please e-mail your signed and scanned questionnaire to politics@newkingsdemocrats.com and info@newkingsdemocrats.com