

CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE: PHILADELPHIA 3.0

GENERAL

Name: Derek S. Green

Office sought and political party affiliation: City Council At-Large, Democrat

Campaign website and/or Facebook page: www.dereksgreen.com
www.facebook.com/councilmanderekgreen

Current neighborhood and total years of residence in Philadelphia: Mt. Airy, 26 years

Age: 48

Children: Julian Green. Julian attends Hill-Freedman High School (Philadelphia School District)

PROFESSIONAL

Education: University of Virginia, Bachelor of Arts, 1992

Temple University School of Law, Juris Doctor, 1998

Current Occupation:

Councilmember At-Large

Previous Occupations:

Special Counsel, Office of Councilwoman Marian B. Tasco

Faculty, Center for Progressive Leadership

Deputy City Solicitor, City of Philadelphia Law Department

Assistant District Attorney, District Attorney's Office

Assistant Deputy Attorney General, Delaware Department of Justice

Assistant Branch Manager & Officer, Meridian Bank

CIVIC

Previous/current elected position:

Previous - Judge of Elections (61st Ward, 19th Division), 5 years

Current – Chair, Gas Commission, Committeeperson (22nd Ward, 16th Division), 8 years

Leadership positions in civic or community groups:

Canaan Family Life Center, Inc., Pro Bono Counsel
Center for Progressive Leadership, Alumni Board of Directors, 2008-2012
Center in the Park, Inc., President, 2010-2014, Board of Directors
Democratic Municipal Officials, Board of Directors
East Mount Airy Neighbors, Inc., President, 2003-2006, Zoning Chairman
Germantown YMCA, First Vice President, 2008–2010
Green Tree School & Services, Board of Directors
Logan CDC, Advisory Board of Directors, 2008–2014
Mt. Airy USA CDC, Board of Directors
National League of Cities, Large City Council
National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials, Board of Directors
New Deal Leader, Member
Pennsylvania Municipal League, 2nd Vice President
Philadelphia Cultural Fund, Board of Directors
Robert Johnson Smith Family Life Center, Inc., Pro Bono Counsel
Urban League of Philadelphia, Board of Directors, 1994–2002
West Oak Lane Charter School, Board of Directors
West Philadelphia YMCA, Board of Managers, 2005–2008

QUALIFICATIONS

In your opinion, what are the core responsibilities of the office you are seeking?:

Under the Philadelphia Home Rule Charter, members of City Council are charged with the powers to enact ordinances and to make rules and regulations necessary and proper for local self-government (See § 1-100). These powers include but are not limited to adopting an annual, balanced operating budget, capital program, and capital budget (See § 2-300). However, “[i]t is expected that Councilmen-at-large will not be bound by sectional consideration in acting upon legislation.” (See Annotation, § 2-100).

How are you uniquely qualified to meet those responsibilities?:

I believe that I am uniquely qualified to meet these responsibilities because of my career experiences and my service in office. As an attorney in City Council, I drafted various ordinances that became law and counseled many members of Council, City employees, and constituents with regards to what actions are necessary and proper for our City. Further and as a former Deputy City Solicitor and

District Attorney, I am intimately knowledgeable with regards to the City's budget process and how this process can impact the operations of City departments and how the City functions and governs. As a small business owner, I know how City ordinances, rules, and regulations can impact the growth of businesses in our City and can determine whether certain legislative initiatives are truly necessary and proper for Philadelphia. Finally and based on these experiences, I know that a core responsibility for an At-Large member of Council is to represent the entire City and to consider how my actions impact all, not some parties or special interests, so that collectively Philadelphia can grow and prosper. During my initial term in Council, I believe that my service as an elected official has demonstrated that I understand the core responsibilities of this position and that I am uniquely qualified to meet these responsibilities.

GOVERNANCE

City Council has considered legislation that would institute a three-term limit for Council members. Should Council approve this or similar legislation, thereby putting the question of term limits for the office of City Council before the voters of Philadelphia?

Yes.

City Council's convention of councilmanic prerogative allows public land use decisions to be made by a single elected official. What is the optimal role for City Council members in the land disposition process? For District candidates: What will be your office's process for making decisions about the sale of publicly-owned land?

Our City's Home Rule Charter has made the disposition of land in Philadelphia problematic. Issues involving Councilmanic prerogative cannot be resolved until the Home Rule Charter is revised. Under the Charter, the City cannot acquire or convey land except by legislation. Consequently, decisions regarding land use involve those elected officials that represent the constituents that will be most impacted ("near neighbors") by changes to land use. To address this issue, we should review how other peer cities acquire and convey land. Through this review, we should be able to determine a best practices standard that can be used for revisions to our Home Rule Charter.

Philadelphia has made some important strides to remove politics and favoritism from the property assessment process; however, recent reporting has shown that the City still has significant work to do. How do you believe the property assessment process should work? And what role, if any, should Council play in this process?

Since the adoption of the Actual Value Initiative during the Nutter Administration, I have been highly critical of the City's Office of Property Assessment ("OPA"). From the failure to implement a Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal ("CAMA") system to wildly fluctuating appraisals of similar properties, OPA has not provided a consistent and professional standard of property assessments that owners can trust. For example, the 2nd Council District has had an average increase of 27% while the District's Point Breeze neighborhood has had an average increase of 43%. Further, the Inquirer and Daily News reviewed over 165,000 property assessments and found that 36% of these properties were overassessed. These findings are consistent with Council's independent audit of OPA by J.F. Ryan Associates, Inc. Through this audit, it was determined that OPA's assessments did not meet industry

standards and, for many areas of the City, assessments were off by 15%. These reports lead to our call for new OPA leadership and a halt to new property assessments.

Under Chapter 2-300 of the Philadelphia Code, the Mayor appoints a Chief Assessment Officer and Council confirms this appointment. Considering the J.F. Ryan audit, I believe that this Chapter should be revised to reflect their industry standard recommendations for a model property assessment process.

Philadelphia’s government includes three independently-elected row offices: The City Commissioners, the Sheriff, and the Register of Wills; a fourth office, the Clerk of Quarter Sessions, was abolished in 2010. Are Philadelphians best served by the functions of these offices being administered by elected officials?

The three independently-elected row offices are positions that date back to a time before the City and County Consolidation. During this Consolidation, various elected positions were eliminated and these positions became Mayoral appointees. For example, the elected Coroner became the Medical Examiner appointed by the Health Commissioner and the elected Recorder of Deeds became the appointed Records Commissioner. In comparison to the Clerk of Quarter Sessions, I believe that we as a City need to have a discussion regarding these positions. In this regard, we should review our peer cities to see if these positions are elected or appointed positions. Through this analysis, we can make a determination whether Philadelphians are best served by these positions being elected or appointed. Further, we may also determine that a hybrid approach is the best way that the functions of these offices can better serve the constituents of our City.

In 2021, City Council will draw and adopt a new District Council map. Council members will have data from the 2020 Census for this purpose. How do you define “fair maps”? And how will your office work to ensure that the Council map adopted during your term is fair, according to that definition?

I define “fair maps” as new District Council maps that reflect input from constituents, are not gerrymandered, and represent approximately 10% of the City’s population. As a Council Chief Legislative Aide and Counsel, I was a co-author of the legislation that created the current District Council maps. At that time, the 1st and 7th Council Districts were significantly gerrymandered and we were able to amend these districts to make them more compact. Once the City receives 2020 Census data, I believe public hearings should be held in each Council District to explain the redistricting process and to invite citizen input in this process. Further, I believe that a second round of hearings should also be held to present to the public proposed new District maps.

EDUCATION

City Council has several direct levers of influence with regards to the School District, including its position in the budget process and its "advice and consent" authority over School Board appointments. How would you articulate Council's role in education? And what single policy objective would you prioritize to improve educational outcomes?

I believe that City Council should work to make sure that all children in the School District of Philadelphia receives a level of education that meets the standard stated in our state constitution. Under Article 3, Section 14 of the Pennsylvania Constitution, “[t]he General Assembly shall provide for

the maintenance and support of a thorough and efficient system of public education to serve the needs of the Commonwealth.” In comparing the amount of state funding for the School District versus other urban education systems that are funded based on the same state constitutional language, it is clear that the standard of our own state constitution is not being met. As a member of City Council, I voted to provide over \$600 million in additional dollars to the School District. However, the School District is not receiving a fair level of funding from the Commonwealth and over the years we have had to increase funding at the local level to make up for this deficit. As we await the decision in the William Penn School District v. PA Dept. of Education litigation, Philadelphia should form a coalition with other county officials to lobby Harrisburg for a fair, weighted funding formula that provides more state funds for Philadelphia’s public school children but also for children throughout Pennsylvania. Due to the elimination of the charter school reimbursement and the growth of cyber charter schools, numerous schools (urban, suburban, and rural) are feeling the impact of a lack of a fair funding formula and this result provides an opportunity to form a unique coalition to address this issue.

FISCAL STABILITY

The Pennsylvania Intergovernmental Cooperation Authority, or PICA, sunsets in 2023 when its bonds are repaid. Would you advocate for the extension of PICA or the creation of a different independent fiscal oversight agency, such as a city budget office? If so, what form should the new oversight agency take?

I introduced Resolution # 171097 to begin the discussion regarding the future of PICA. Considering the sunset provision in its enabling legislation, we need to develop a plan for PICA’s future that will be approved by the General Assembly. I believe that this discussion will raise various ideas concerning PICA’s future. In the end, I believe that we should use this opportunity to develop a funding stream that will be used to reduce our pension deficit. Also, I introduced Resolution # 181112 to discuss the creation of an independent fiscal office. The goal of this office is to review the fiscal impact of executive and legislative proposals. Accordingly, this goal could be a responsibility of a re-authorized PICA.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Since 2009, the 25 largest cities in the US have averaged 2.3% annual job growth, while Philadelphia averaged only 1.4%. What is your vision for economic development that would significantly increase job growth? And how would you preserve affordability as the city experiences growth in jobs and population?

My vision for Philadelphia is a city where we no longer have the title of the largest big city with the highest level of poverty in the nation. With a 26% poverty rate, this title has defined our City. This level of poverty is generally concentrated in communities beyond Center City. In many ways, Philadelphia has become a tale of two cities. Higher income and gentrifying neighborhoods are seeing property values skyrocket and moderate to low income communities are not seeing this level of growth. Further, these growing neighborhoods are attracting entrepreneurs and businesses who are creating jobs for these communities. In contrast, moderate to low income neighborhoods are struggling to fill vacant storefronts with businesses that can reduce poverty with jobs. As a City, we need policies and initiatives that will help all neighborhoods and not just a select few communities.

Through my experiences as a small business lender, entrepreneur, and nonprofit leader, one of the best ways to address poverty is the ability to grow small businesses. Our ability to grow these businesses will benefit our entire City. From Washington Lane to Washington Avenue, every neighborhood in our City has a commercial corridor that is the anchor of the community and the hub of its small business sector. In order for these companies to grow and thrive, they need assistance from our City so that they can employ our neighbors and increase their wages.

To support this goal, I worked with the Commerce Department to create the Philadelphia Business Lending Network (“Lending Network”). The Lending Network is a consortium of 30 banks, credit unions, and lenders that use one application to provide access to credit to small businesses. In comparison to Lending Tree, this initiative is a one stop, online resource that is helping small businesses in our City. Through the Lending Network, small businesses are able to grow and provide income to their employees. This new or additional income will also help other businesses because employees will have more resources to buy goods and services. Further, this income will also provide more revenue for the City’s General Fund and will enable more investments in education, City services, and other needs for Philadelphia. By growing small businesses in neighborhoods around our City, we can begin to reduce our poverty rate and move from a tale of two cities to one community where growth is shared throughout Philadelphia.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Philadelphia is the only major American city without regular, citywide municipal street sweeping. Additionally, numerous studies have demonstrated that Philadelphians are deeply concerned about short dumping and litter. As a Councilmember, how would you address this persistent quality of life issue?

In Mayor Kenney’s budget address, he proposed spending \$11.7 million over the life of the five year plan to implement municipal street sweeping in more neighborhoods. This spring, Mayor Kenney also proposes to launch a street sweeping pilot program in six neighborhoods. As a member of Council, I would support these expenditures for the FY20 operating budget and five year plan. However, this initiative should also include analysis of comparable size cities that have municipal street sweeping. Further, this pilot should also provide a road map towards a strategic plan to implement City wide street sweeping and its annual cost.

VISION

You are running for a four-year term in City Council. What do you hope to accomplish during these four years?

As a member of Council, I hope to accomplish the following:

- new non ratepayer revenue for PGW from the Passyunk LNG terminal;
- dedicated funding stream for the Commerce Department’s Global Identity Project;
- growth of the Philadelphia Business Lending Network;

reauthorization of the PICA tax;

creation of an independent fiscal office;

term limit legislation;

public financing system of elections;

bond offering to fund enhanced residential weatherization and solar projects;

regional coalition of local elected officials that will advocate for a fair, weighted funding formula for Pennsylvania; and

comprehensive review of all City programs that promote small business growth and job development and new initiatives that will coordinate these programs in a more efficient and effective manner.