

PHILADELPHIA 3.0

CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

GENERAL

Name: Eryn Santamoor

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

Campaign website and/or Facebook page: <https://www.erynforcouncil.com> & <https://www.facebook.com/ErynForCouncil>

Current neighborhood and total years of residence in Philadelphia: Fairmount, 15 Years a Philadelphian

Age: 39

Children (if so, what schools did/do they attend?): I have two children - my daughter is 9 years old and my son is 7 years old. Both children now attend William Penn Charter School.

Endorsements to Date: Governor Rendell, Mayor Nutter, State Representative Jared Solomon, Transport Workers Union 234, 5th Square

Funds Raised to Date: Over \$215,000

Petitions to Date: Over 3,000 signatures to date

PROFESSIONAL

Education (college/grad school/certificate; degree & year earned in each): University of Pennsylvania, Fels Institute of Government (2006), Master of Public Administration and Politics Certificate; and Cornell University, School of Human Ecology (2001), Bachelor of Science, Policy Analysis and Management

Current occupation: Full-time City Council at-Large Candidate

Previous occupations:

- **Vikki for Judge Campaign, Campaign Committee Co-Chair (2017)** - Responsible for the strategy and oversight of a democratic candidate running for the PA Court of Common Pleas.
- **Public Financial Management, Senior Managing Director (2013-2016)** - Worked as a national expert on city management and public finance. Projects focused primarily on identifying areas of opportunity in city investment and budgeting strategies, service delivery and accountability management, labor practices, community engagement, and change management. Areas of expertise included public safety (police, fire/EMS, prisons), utilities (streets and water), and business or commerce (licensing and permitting).
- **City of Philadelphia, Deputy Managing Director (2008-2013)** - Appointed by the Mayor and Managing Director to design, execute, and manage an integrated performance management system. PhillyStat and Philly311 were valuable management tools employed to evaluate operational performance of departments, hold leadership accountable, and provide a transparent manner in which citizens could access departmental information and issue service requests regularly. Also served as

the Director of Strategic Initiatives for Public Safety, to enhance services and manage new technology improvement projects that realized savings for the General Fund budget. This led to \$18M in funding for much-needed personnel in Fire and EMS, 911 Call Center Funding, and an additional \$4M increase in revenue from a new performance contract in EMS.

- **Nutter for Mayor Campaign, Finance Director (2005-2007)** - First employee of the campaign and architect of a fundraising operation and strategy to win a mayoral election in a five-person primary election with newly established campaign finance restrictions. Raised over \$8M from over 10,000 donors throughout the city and region.

CIVIC

Leadership positions in civic or community groups:

- Center for Grieving Children (Board member)
- Women's Way (Former Board Member)
- Fairmount Civic Association
- Spring Garden Civic Association
- Center City Residents Association
- 15th Ward Democratic Committee (actively involved but not a committee person)
- Philadelphia Committee on City Policy

QUALIFICATIONS

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

The role of a City Councilperson At-Large is to work with the Mayor and our various communities to establish an aspirational and audacious vision for the City and then build the strategy, coalitions, and resources to achieve that vision. City Council must also provide proper oversight of the City's operations, budget, and general management of city services on a regular basis - and do so in a transparent manner. Additionally, I believe this body is responsible for setting the right kind of tone and tenor for the City and is charged with providing public narratives that more closely align with the realities of managing a \$12B budget and 28,000 employees - a reality that includes the need to grow an economy responsibly while meeting the needs of our communities and businesses. This is a difficult task and requires leaders who understand not just the macro level narratives, but the intricate details associated with the impact of decisions and actions being made by the legislative body.

Lastly, the core responsibility of City Council is to understand the complexities and intersections of governing, management, and community engagement, and to do so with the courage to set goals and be held accountable for implementing a plan to achieve those goals.

How are you uniquely qualified to meet those responsibilities?

I committed myself to a life of public service at a very young age, spending my younger years (in college) studying and learning everything possible about how government could become a better actor in the public sector. As I make this run for City Council At-Large I realize I am the only candidate who has spent their entire career working to make local government - most particularly Philadelphia's - perform smarter, faster, and better. I believe I have the right blend of compassion, experience, and vision to put together a transformative agenda supported by a dynamic and collaborative team of City and non-City actors.

My professional background in public service, more specifically in city management and public finance, uniquely positions me as a candidate who understands how to get things done in city government. Philadelphia deserves a Councilwoman who has implemented programs, argued effectively for change, and has what it takes to make tough decisions in this political and financial environment.

My previous work as a Deputy Managing Director in Philadelphia resulted in new and exciting changes, including programs such as Philly311 and PhillyStat. No longer did Philadelphians have to know someone in government to receive the services they deserved; and from that point forward, departments were held accountable for responding to people's requests for service. I spent time learning how all of our major departments manage their budget, deploy resources, and where they could improve their daily and long-term operations. In this role, I spent my time cultivating a more customer-friendly and strategic operation to better serve our people and businesses. If we want things to change in this City, then it will require someone who understands how we activate 28,000 employees every day, raise and spend \$12B in our communities, and most importantly, how we can alter our system to get the kind of results Philadelphians deserve from their city government.

I additionally worked with cities across the country while serving as a Senior Managing Director at Public Financial Management. There, I mainly advised cities in distress, and worked alongside members of various city governments to make sound budgetary decisions - in part by identifying inefficiencies and underachieving programs. This allowed the cities I worked with to invest more in underfunded programs and activities that effectively served residents and businesses with the kind of impact necessary for altering their trajectory as a city.

For each statement below please indicate, where applicable, whether you agree or disagree, and comment to elaborate on your response. You can agree in whole or part. Do not feel limited to the available comment space; we want to hear your thoughts.

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

I believe strongly in the "Citizen Legislator" concept. I don't think our City Council seats are owned by a family or political organization and think that it's healthy for our local democracy when we promote regular turnover in our legislature. Moreover, term limits encourage fresh, diverse voices and new ideas in government. They encourage bold action and keep our elections competitive, which is good for our democratic process.

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?

District councilmembers should play a role in representing their district's interests by providing neighborhood-level sentiment, but the power to acquire and dispose of city land should be in the hands of the experts and truly independent actors. Community needs and independent experts should guide the future of our neighborhoods.

While I'm not running for a District seat, I do believe that councilmanic prerogative is an antiquated feature of our government that should be legislated out of existence. Land use decisions should be looked at through the lens of

economic productivity and broader community benefit. Philadelphia needs to get the best use out of our limited real estate, produce healthy tax revenues, and take into account the impact that land use will have on the local community and the City at-large. These are inquiries that should be examined and discussed in a transparent manner by those affected and those with expertise and should be free from the constraints of transactional politics.

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?

Philadelphia needs timely, accurate, transparent, and independent property assessments. Getting this right is critical because property taxes are a key revenue stream for the city now (approx. 20% of the General Fund's revenue) and will continue to be moving forward, as I and others would like to see an increased reliance on property tax - both commercial and residential - and movement away from a wage tax dependent revenue base.

To that end, I support reform efforts to the land disposition process to ensure the Vacant Property Review Committee (VPRC) no longer serves as a mechanism to undervalue land and secure favorable deals for the well-connected. I am supportive of moving the VPRC under the authority of the Land Bank to facilitate independence and streamline efforts and processes.

Additionally, the Computer-Assisted Mass Appraisal (CAMA) system should enable more expedient property assessments and revaluations and allow for the sharing of assessment and appeals information more efficiently across City agencies. I've reviewed the strategy and funding for the Office of Property Assessment (OPA) in the recently released Five Year Plan and see that proposed investments would enable the Office of Property Assessment to add additional modelling capability, a sales validation unit, and other data collection services. Based on this, I believe OPA can be on a solid trajectory but needs to be effectively overseen and resourced, work that I will commit to as Councilperson.

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?

YES

I believe that the remaining row offices should be absorbed into the general government. There are efficiencies to be made by eliminating duplicative services and resources. Removing politics from service delivery is also a critical goal - and politics always comes into play when elections are the source of power for these offices. I would support putting these offices' abolition to the public in a subsequent election and using a civil service model to ensure these responsibilities are properly managed within city government.

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?

Fair maps are when they meet standards of contiguity, compactness, and neighborhood/community cohesiveness. To that end, I would support an independent commission for drawing City Council Districts. Districts should be established to benefit the residents/taxpayers, not to protect incumbency. Further, I would look to see that operational and administrative districts used by City departments - as well as Federal and Commonwealth governments - are

better aligned with City Council Districts to increase collaboration and create more transparency and accountability citywide.

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?

As with City Departments and Agencies, Council must assume a strong oversight role over our public schools to ensure they are performing up to standard - and partner with the the School District of Philadelphia (SDP) to make certain that our schools are fully funded. While I believe we need to increase the level of resources provided to the SDP (in real dollars and in service support), we need to ensure that the tax dollars the District does receive are spent wisely and efficiently. I will strongly support enhancing the School District's implementation of performance management frameworks and tools, with an ultimate goal of a "SchoolStat" program to assess how individual schools and the District as a whole perform academically and across key budget, operational, community and parental engagement areas. We must include teachers as part of this process so their voices and perspectives are heard on an on-going basis.

That said, as we remain focused on academic achievement and the well-being of our students and families, our approach to education must recognize and respond to the emotional, behavioral, physical and mental health issues plaguing our children and their families. We have to expand in-school support services and further invest in counseling, therapy, casework, and social work if we truly hope to change the trajectory of our children and families' lives for generations to come. As Councilwoman, this will be a top priority of my policy agenda; students cannot learn and families cannot thrive otherwise.

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?

YES

I understand PICA's historical relevance and importance to the City's fiscal health and stability, but believe there is structural fiscal oversight already embedded into our local government. We already have a Finance Department responsible for building a five-year financial plan and annual budget under the Mayor, a City Council who - as part of their core responsibilities - is reviewing the financial security of that budget and long-term plan, and a City Controller also independently elected to oversee Philadelphia's fiscal health.

In fact, by Charter, the City Controller provides the last "right of refusal" for the City's budget. In section 2-302 of the Charter, "The annual operating budget ordinance shall not become effective and the City Controller shall not approve any order for any expenditure thereunder until the Council has balanced the budget."

We have the financial oversight necessary to appropriately and responsibly manage the fiscal health of our city, but what's needed are elected officials who understand public finance and budgeting as a core responsibility and function

of their position. To that end, all elected officials should be given sufficient public finance and budgeting training as part of any onboarding process, in addition to regular training throughout their terms.

Should PICA's oversight disappear, I would support the requirement that the Mayor provide an annual five-year financial plan that is balanced (similar to current PICA standards), along with an annual budget to City Council, the City Controller, and the public.

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?

Philadelphia must build a growing, diverse, inclusive and resilient economy. To do so, we must align taxes, regulations, and incentives to cultivate the right type of job and wage growth. Philadelphia urgently needs a comprehensive review of our city's tax code (including tax incentives), regulatory framework, and fees-for-service in the context of our budgetary needs and job/wage growth aspirations. Acknowledging that it would require a change to the Commonwealth's Constitution, I am supportive of the "Levy/Sweeney Plan" floated several years ago that would shift tax burdens toward commercial real estate and away from wage and business taxes. This approach would be consistent with that of our peer cities, most of whom are growing their economies more quickly than Philadelphia.

Specifically, if elected I will work towards:

- Building a more comprehensive and responsive tax system in partnership with our Revenue Department, including incentives and tax credits that build the economy we want - focused on drastically enhancing our economic growth rate, responsibly supporting our city's revenue needs, and aligning job training programs with emerging industries.
- Shifting to a higher commercial real estate tax model - rather than a uniform tax rate for commercial properties and homes - to enhance overall real estate tax collection.
- Continuing the reduction of the wage tax and shifting to a progressive rate while the tax remains.
- Geographic-based and graduated property tax abatements for the real estate community intentionally targeted in areas of the city that have yet to experience the benefits of development. We must also consider the high costs of construction relative to our surrounding counties and ensure we are competitive in the development market. Simultaneously, preservation of affordable housing through increased investment in programs like the Housing Trust Fund, must be a goal of any adjustment to our real estate tax abatement program.
- Gross receipts tax reduction and elimination over the next 5 years.
- Simplifying our tax code; for example, by gradually phasing out the requirement that businesses pay for estimated future revenues as part of the Business Income and Receipts Tax (BIRT).
- Strategic investment in our transit system, including rapid bus lines, to areas yet to experience residential and commercial corridor growth at the same levels of other neighborhoods.

To preserve affordability, as Councilwoman I would:

- Expand funding for Philadelphia's Housing Trust Fund, a flexible program that supports a variety of activities that preserve and create new affordable housing opportunity including unit development and financial counseling.

- Continue to reform our zoning code to promote affordability through density requirements and inclusionary zoning practices.
- Incentivize new and innovative means of construction, such as modular construction, that bring new jobs to the city, lower costs, and result in shorter construction times.
- Work with our state and federal delegations to advocate for increased funding for affordable housing preservation and construction, including increased funding for PHARE (the state housing trust fund) and a State Housing Tax Credit.

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?

I'm obsessed with street and sidewalk cleanliness and it will be one of my top priorities as Council person. When it comes to improving City services, I want to see better delivery across the board to all neighborhoods. In particular, I am dedicated to making Philadelphia the cleanest city in the world, and I fully support the aspirations of the City's Zero Waste & Litter Action Plan. But we can be more ambitious and build next generation trash collection processes. As your City Councilwoman, I will commit myself to modernizing our trash and recycling collection practices to clean up our city streets and neighborhoods.

In particular, I'd pursue the following:

- **Refuse:** I would support incremental legislation to ban from our waste stream single-use, non-biodegradable plastics and styrofoam, including bags and straws. Some items we need to keep out of our waste stream in the first place because they too frequently end up in the wrong places like trees, sidewalks, streets and storm grates.
- **Recycle:** We need to ensure that materials we collect are in such a condition as to be sold for the highest and best use. We need to make a profit on our sale of collected recyclables. As such, I would support the creation of a staffed "recycling commodities broker" function in the Streets Department to ensure we get the best prices and distribution for our recycling material. This would include long-term planning and monitoring of global market shifts and trends.
- **Dumping Enforcement:** We need to leverage smart city technologies that can provide automated detection and enforcement capabilities.
- **Modernize Trash Collection:** It's time for the City to invest in automated, semi-automated and containerized trash collection both above ground and underground where possible. New technology provides opportunities for implementing more efficient routing techniques that can save time and money as well as free up resources for other important activities. We need to fully leverage automated vehicle location (AVL) services so that we ensure efficient routing is established and effectively monitored. Additionally, City employees are performing a labor-intensive job that too often results in work-related accidents and injuries. We must invest differently in our employees by using new technology to improve their health, well-being and productivity.
- **Sweeping:** With the liberation of resources that come from modernization, I would look to invest in an expanded sweeping operation, particularly sidewalk sweeping to capture litter and debris before it ever reaches our streets.

More generally, City government's primary purpose is to provide services to people and businesses that excite, inspire and satisfy basic needs like safety and cleanliness. Prioritizing \$12B in annual spending and orchestrating

approximately 28,000 employees to deliver services harmoniously is only possible with an intentional vision for the city and a performance management program that tells you whether or not you're getting closer to your vision.

In 2008 the City of Philadelphia created two programs, Philly311 and PhillyStat. These programs were meant to work together with Philly311 feeding relevant data and resident sentiment into PhillyStat, the City's "PerformanceStat" program modeled after Baltimore's [CitiStat](#). Philly311 was established as one of the primary intake mechanisms for operational performance data, and PhillyStat the forum to review, learn from and respond to such data. Philly311 is going strong after 10 years but unfortunately the PhillyStat program was eliminated several years ago.

I would prioritize the following:

- Elevate 311: Excellent city service is the primary objective of our local government, and Philly311 can be the brain that analyzes data and prompts the appropriate governmental response. Becoming the central ingestor and analyzer of information related to City services is a natural evolution. Leveraging "smart city" technologies to monitor operations in real time, mining social media sentiment, and combining that with existing Philly311 and other City data can provide a rich analytical composite from which to identify areas of success and opportunity.
- Re-Establish PhillyStat: Measuring results is only the first step; we then must analyze and act. Therefore, I will work to re-establish a PhillyStat system for the City, which will establish performance metrics to be reviewed by City Council on a monthly basis so that operational and resource adjustments can be made to improve outcomes and we can track progress throughout the city in a constructive, collaborative, and transparent manner.

VISION

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

I believe City Council can provide a stronger vision for Philadelphia's future if we have elected officials with the know-how and energy to help create and implement a plan that strategically addresses our biggest challenges and builds on our many attributes. It is the primary reason I believe Philadelphia 3.0 PAC should support my candidacy - I have made a career of strengthening cities by not just standing up for change but by being a leader in making it happen. Philadelphia is at an inflection point where local leadership will determine our trajectory for decades to come. I promise to serve this city responsibly and with the kind of care, compassion, knowledge, and energy needed to ensure its future success. I have answered this questionnaire with the kind of vision for our future that I believe organizations like yours and our people deserve, and I hope that you will consider my previous answers as part of a response to this question.

Philadelphia faces many challenges in the near and long-term, but I believe we can invest differently in our people by addressing the root causes of our greatest challenges. As Councilwoman, I will be focused on issues of mental, emotional and behavioral health. This includes providing counselors, case workers, social workers and therapists in our schools and in our communities. I also want to ensure our local economy is growing equitably to increase job and wealth opportunities for all, and I'm willing to stand up for change and then carefully monitor its impact on our city. Lastly, I want to see Philadelphia provide high quality basic city services in every neighborhood across this city -

focusing especially on issues of waste management, transit, business services, and street paving. Social justice is reflected in my sense of urgency to provide well-managed services that extend to every neighborhood.

In focusing on these areas of local government I hope to increase our city's population, decrease our wealth gap, and increase local revenues to be invested in programs that have the greatest impact for our most vulnerable communities.

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Not authorized by any candidate or candidate's committee (Continued 5 of 5)