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2021 Environmental Questionnaire for New York City Candidates

Thank you for taking the time to fill out the New York League of Conservation Voters Questionnaire.

To ensure your responses address the issues NYLCV and its partners are most concerned about, please consult [NYLCV's 2021 New York City Policy Agenda](#) when answering the questions.

The New York League of Conservation Voters is the only non-partisan, statewide environmental organization in New York that fights for clean water, clean air, renewable energy, and open space through political action. This questionnaire is designed to elicit your views regarding what environmental, public health, clean energy and transit, and environmental justice groups consider to be the most important issues of the day. Responses may inform NYLCV's educational and legislative programs and actions NYLCV takes in the election cycle.

Responses should be considered public. Although NYLCV may choose not to publicize the responses to every question, verbatim responses may be reproduced and distributed publicly. If so, your responses may be shortened, if necessary, but will not be edited in substantive ways. If you choose to refer us to a position paper or website, please indicate exactly what text you would like us to cite. For candidates choosing not to respond to the questionnaire, NYLCV will note as much in its public materials.

NYLCV and its partners in the environmental policy arena believe that New York's voters are determined to make the environment a voting issue this year. Candidate positions on issues such as protecting public health, building a clean energy future, and mitigating climate change will help voters decide how to cast their ballots this election cycle. This questionnaire is one of the primary ways the public will get this information.

Here are a few guidelines:

- ✔ Questionnaires are due **Friday, February 26, 2021**.
- ✔ The completed questionnaire is mandatory for endorsement consideration and must be submitted via e-mail as a Microsoft Word file to: politics@nylcv.org
- ✔ Questions or extension requests may be directed to Joshua Klainberg (jklainberg@nylcv.org)
- ✔ After receipt of the completed questionnaire, candidates will be invited to participate in a formal interview with a local Chapter Board.
- ✔ Candidate endorsements will be made by the NYLCV State Board on April 29, 2021.

Commented [1]: @christian@amandafarias.nyc I finished it, let me know when its good to send off.
Assigned to Christian Amato

CAMPAIGN CONTACT INFORMATION

Candidate name: Amanda Farias

Office sought & district number: City Council, District 18

Campaign e-mail: amanda@amandafarias.nyc

Campaign phone: 917-517-2750

Website: <https://www.amandafarias.nyc/>

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/AmandaFariasNYC/>

Twitter handle: @AmandaFariasNYC

Campaign manager's name and email: Christian Amato, christian@amandafarias.nyc

Press Secretary's name and email: N/A

Scheduler's name and email: N/A

PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Please share your accomplishments or experiences that indicate your commitment to advancing a pro-environment agenda. These experiences may be professional or personal.

Our planet is on the brink of a climate emergency. We have recognized the national attention to this crisis through the bold work of scientists, climate advocates, and millions of young activists. New York must remain at the forefront of this crisis by championing policies that reverse the effects of climate change and deliver a new sector of critical jobs. In coastal communities like ours, we must be doubly committed to this fight. Professionally, I have been committed to prioritizing funding and programming with local parks, reservoirs, reforming transit and roadways, and creating more green space. I have worked with the Billion Oyster Initiatives, previous Million Trees Initiative, and prioritized green and carbon reducing projects on Participatory Budgeting Cycles. Personally, I am committed to Expand Green Spaces, Peninsula protection in CD18, Retrofitting NYCHA and Fighting Climate Change Locally through green roofs on all public city-owned buildings, installing green roofs where we can, moving towards solar, hydropower, wind turbines, and getting fewer cars on the road through equitable and accessible transit options many others.

ISSUES



Each year, NYLCV works closely with New York’s leading environmental, public health, conservation, energy, environmental justice, and transportation organizations to identify the most pressing priorities on fighting climate change, conserving land and water, and protecting public health. These issues drive NYLCV’s advocacy work throughout the legislative session, influence the bills we select for NYLCV’s Environmental Scorecards, and informs the decision on the candidates we choose to endorse. To ensure your responses are in alignment with the issues NYLCV and its partners are most concerned about, please review [NYLCV’s 2021 New York City Policy Agenda](#) when formulating your responses.

Please indicate your level of commitment to, and if applicable your recent personal and professional activity concerning, all the policy priorities of our partners per the following issues:

Top Priorities

Transportation isn’t only the number one source of greenhouse gas emissions in our state—it is also a major source of air pollution, causing respiratory and other public health issues. This is particularly the case near New York City’s many major highways where too often, these communities are low-income and communities of color.

2. Encouraging the Shift to High Efficiency, Low Emission Forms of Transportation (p. 3)

Fully committed.

I am running on a platform that is prioritizing the expansion of multimodal mobility priorities that build multimodal transit hubs, which will significantly improve the system, and expand sustainable transportation options for our community by establishing more Citibike locations throughout the district, utilizing e-scooters and rebels, expanding protected bike lanes for cyclists, and capping off the I95.

More than ever, New Yorkers realized the value of our parks and open spaces in 2020 as our cultural institutions were closed and we had to practice social distancing. Open green space is one of the City’s most valuable environmental assets but also contributes to the well-being of our residents and our economy.

3. Conserving New York City’s Parks and Natural Areas (p. 3)

Fully committed.

I am running on a platform to expand green spaces. Where we prioritize the health and wellbeing of our community by expanding the maintenance budget for Soundview Park and supporting the greening of existing playgrounds. This is a public health issue; passive park spaces are just as necessary as active park spaces for communities in The Bronx.

I am also running to protect CD18, which is a peninsula. Decades ago, some people thought polluted rivers and streams were the prices we had to pay for progress. That’s not a world we



have to live in anymore. Nor is it the future our children deserve. Our community has plenty of waterfront space, and we need innovative ways to reclaim the shoreline for public access and productive uses that benefit our community. Similarly, we need to protect our natural wetlands and ecosystems by finding opportunities to create a mosaic of habitats with high ecological value and function that provide environmental and societal benefits.

Reaching the City's Zero Waste goal by 2030 will require work from all New Yorkers—cooperation of city officials and private industry, and buy-in from the public. Stimulating behavioral change is critical to meeting this goal, as is ensuring the City has programs in place that promote waste reduction, diversion, and sustainable waste management.

4. Common Sense Waste Management (p. 3)

Fully committed.

I would like to expand on citywide organics collection and [for the first time] implement organics collection in CD18. In addition, additional supportive ways to achieve zero waste by 2030 are to restore, expand, and secure baseline funding for organics collection, support single stream recycling, reduce the use of plastic bags, ban plastic straws and other non-compostable waste. While white and wealthier communities citywide were prioritized for curbside pickup, compost dropoff sites, and composting education CD18 was left behind again. In the meantime, we can support community dropoff sites, community collection and processing initiatives and look for ways to expand these efforts. Education for the people on why this is important and why it matters is key.

Combating Climate Change

The time to act on climate is now. The recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report makes it clear that we must make radical changes in short order to avoid catastrophic climate change. We will work to advance policies that decrease emissions from all sectors, prepare us to meet the unavoidable impacts of climate change, reduce waste, and foster a strong green economy. We must also ensure the changes we make to tackle climate change benefit disadvantaged communities and provide for a just transition.

5. Energy and Infrastructure (p. 5)

Fully Committed.

I would like to see a larger focus on the City's wastewater treatment plants to process organic waste into renewable energy, and support the Renewable Rikers implementation. Through my municipal jobs guarantee plan, I advocate for the creation of green jobs that not only prioritize unionization, and economic justice but environmental justice.

6. Transportation (p. 5)

Fully Committed.



I've mentioned some of my transit commitments above, here are additional ones:

Eliminate Two Fare-Zones – Guarantee that no New Yorker is paying more money because of limited access to transit in their neighborhood by eliminating all two fare-zones and ensuring access to more efficient transit options, like our local ferry service, are included as transfers.

Expand Multimodal Mobility – Build multimodal transit hubs, which will significantly improve the system, and expand sustainable transportation options for our community by establishing more Citibike locations throughout the district.

Invest in Outer-borough Communities – Support sustainable outer-borough transportation by establishing the Tri-boro line to connect The Bronx and Queens without requiring detours through Manhattan. We will also support Support the Amtrak Gateway Project.

Prioritize Transit Equity – Support low-income communities by guaranteeing access to affordable transportation through the Fair Fares program.

Municipal Control of Buses – We know we cannot depend on Albany to fund our transit responsibly. The City can pilot the initial step towards running its transit system by providing free bus service. By changing the City Charter, we can raise taxes on the rich, so the City does not need Albany's funding. City buses provide roughly 2 million rides a year - this critical infrastructure change would impact thousands of working-class people.

7. Resiliency (p. 6)

Fully Committed.

What communities like mine need to be done, including other parts of the city, are finding ways to strengthen zoning codes to protect homes against the dangers of climate change, storm surges or sea level rises. As mentioned previously, we are a peninsula and have waterfront communities. We also have to protect our natural waterfront and wetlands where people live, and the Ferry is docked. Additionally we need to focus on retrofitting NYCHA.

8. Solid Waste (p. 7)

Fully Committed.

I am committed to ensuring the reinstatement of the solid waste advisory board in the Bronx and want to

Protecting People and Natural Resources



All New Yorkers deserve indoor and outdoor environments that are free of contamination and pollution. We will promote policies that provide access to healthy air and water, protect our open spaces, and improve the well-being of all New Yorkers.

9. Parks, Natural Areas, and Active Waterfronts (p. 9)

Fully Committed.

Other than what is previously mentioned, I am committed to more open park spaces, walkable shorelines, and wetland protection in CD18.

10. Lead Poisoning Prevention (p. 9)

Fully Committed.

I would like the City to be proactive in addressing lead poisoning prevention in our edifices. We need legislative action that encourages increased communication internally to accomplish construction, repairs and enforcement around lead poisoning.

11. Reduce and Mitigate Heat Vulnerability (p. 9 – 10)

Fully Committed.

12. Clean Air for All (p. 10)

Fully Committed.

As stated above, I would like to see multiple forms of efficient transit options implemented like Citibike, e-scooters, and revels. I would also like to see an expansion of safe streets in my community. I particularly would like to re-design local truck and delivery routes throughout the community to prioritize hours when less pedestrians and cars are out, and I have been advocating for the capping of the I95 in my district to reduce emissions and pollution into the air. We also need to eliminate the two Bronx peaker plants that remain.

13. Clean Water for All (p.11)

Fully committed.

14. Sustainable Food Systems (p. 11)

Fully committed.



The Bronx remains New York City's hungriest borough in every category, with more than one in four Bronx residents experiencing food insecurity. This includes more than 20 percent of all children, nearly 17 percent of working adults, and almost 24 percent of seniors, according to federal data analyzed by Hunger Free America. While the number of people in New York City who are food insecure decreased over the last six years, the number remains higher than the recession and will continue to rise post-covid. During this pandemic, I took off my political hat, stopped fundraising, and called every single community leader, tenant organizer, and neighbor I knew to do work from the ground up.

In two weeks, I started a local mutual aid group with just 15 volunteers. Over the last 5 months we raised almost \$28K, gave out over 10K in PPE, served over 4K residents in need with fresh food and groceries and counting. Before this pandemic District 18 was already a food desert. We had communities that did not have a local supermarket in walking distance, we have a fresh food market located in 1 part of the district 1 day a week. I chose to write about this here because this part of the work no one was willing to do in the community. Food pantries, senior centers, hospital social workers were calling our mutual aid group to feed seniors and families - and this cannot be the standard for my community.

As Council Member, I plan to fully support our food pantries, senior centers and green markets to make food accessible. The food and agriculture work being done across many different City agencies continues without a unified, comprehensive food plan with a formal community engagement strategy, or consistent and meaningful tools for measuring the impact of City agencies' efforts to address food issues. Without governance reforms, we are limiting the impact of City interventions to combat the social and economic food inequities that millions of our city's residents combat each day. In the City Council we need to improve and institutionalize the Office of Food Policy, update food metric reporting by reforming Local Law 52, and I would like to create a multi-year food policy plan for the City. Without a citywide food plan, we will miss an opportunity to bring a strategic framework, goal-oriented planning, and coordination to key areas of the food system, including hunger, nutrition, access to healthy food, food waste, food and farm economics, and urban agriculture and sustainability.

