

Campaign Contact Information

Candidate name: Donovan Richards

Office sought & district number: Queens Borough President

Campaign e-mail: donovanrichards2013@gmail.com

Campaign phone: 347-426-7961

Website: [www.https://www.richardsforqueens.com](https://www.richardsforqueens.com)

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

Twitter handle: @DrichardsQns

Campaign manager's name and email: Jesse Conrad, jesse@theadvancegroup.com

Press Secretary's name and email: Thomas Musich, thomas@theadvancegroup.com

Scheduler's name and email: Sorena Fabre

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.

I recognize the threat that climate change poses not only to Queens but to the whole world. I am committed to putting Queens at the forefront as the most sustainable Borough in the United States. I am proud to have re-established the Queens Solid Waste Advisory Board (QSWAB), which is committed to moving NYC towards a zero waste future, and tackling important issues such as, but not limited to, waste, recycling, resiliency and environmental equity. After three years of advocacy, the QSWAB has transitioned into a formal group which I have recognized and supported.

I am committed to investing in a greener future, one which will improve our air quality and public health long-term, educate future generations, and create tens of thousands of green jobs. Once these short-term goals have been achieved I want to work on making Queens fully renewable by 2030.

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)

I am committed to transforming our bike network into a borough-wide interconnected web for all our families to safely enjoy. No matter which neighborhood you call home, I want to make the bicycle a legitimate and above all safe form of transportation. This means directing capital dollars to redesign our streets, and I also envision building a network of bike storage hubs outside our subway stations to encourage multi-modal transportation. I also plan to speed up Citi Bike's rollout across Queens and to introduce scooter sharing to Queens.

In addition to encouraging more bicycle use, my plan includes introducing a fully-electric bus fleet to reduce emissions and to improve our air quality.

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)

I treasure our green spaces and parks which are enjoyed by thousands of families and residents. I have worked hard to rebuild our infrastructure and rethink housing solutions in Queens, and have done this with concern for the environment and for our parks.

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)

In addition to re-establishing the Queens Solid Waste Advisory Board (QSWAB) which tackles issues surrounding waste and recycling, among other issues, I am committed to investing in a green future which will improve public health in the long-run as well as promoting sustainable waste management in the move towards meeting our 2030 zero waste goal. I plan to partner with higher education institutions, private entities, and the Queens EDC to create sustainable innovation labs. I also intend to use the budget to implement solar power in city-owned buildings, and will partner with the private sector on public/private partnerships to help make private homes more sustainable. I will make sure that all new developments are sustainable, which will contribute to reducing unnecessary waste.

As a Councilman, I did a lot of work to help clean up and rebuild our city following Superstorm Sandy. I was committed to ensuring our city is clean then and I am committed now.

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)

I am committed to ensuring that positive changes are made which make use of modern technologies, switch to renewable energy sources wherever possible, to reduce emissions and prepare us for the inevitable risks we face due to climate change.

I pledge to ensure the full implementation of Local Law 97, the Climate Mobilization Act, and will create renewable energy sites such as Rikers Island, Edgemere Landfill in the Rockaways, and the Creedmoor Campus, to facilitate the closure of fossil fuel plants in Queens.

I was proud to vote in favor of the plan put forth by Mayor Bill de Blasio to fully divest NYCERS funds from fossil fuel companies, to protect both our planet and pensions.

6. Transportation (p. 5)

I am committed to overhauling our transportation system and changing it for the better, ensuring that all corners of our borough are well connected and that all residents have options for safe and efficient transportation. My proposals for the future of transportation in Queens have environmental concerns as a priority. By making transportation greener and more efficient we can reduce emissions. My plan for transport includes: Busways along center medians with all-door boarding, speeding up commutes and making our commercial corridors more accessible, starting with Archer Avenue in Jamaica. I plan to introduce an all-electric bus fleet, and will expand the Jamaica Bus Depot, so that the MTA can better serve this borough for decades to come.

7. Resiliency (p. 6)

I am absolutely committed to protecting the environment and ensuring that our city has the infrastructure that it needs to combat the astronomical effects of climate change. Even in the pre-Sandy era our city did not have the infrastructure required to prevent damage from rising sea levels, and the projections of climate change suggest that Queens will no longer be on the map in fifty years time due to sea level rise. I was honoured to hold the Chair of the

Environmental Protection Committee which enabled me to learn about the effects of climate change. I am committed to developing a citywide plan to tackle long-term resiliency, particularly since we know that climate change disproportionately affects communities of color.

8. Solid Waste (p. 7)

I have been involved with the QSWAB for several years, and absolutely support New York's ambitious goal to send zero waste to landfills through reduction, reuse, recycling, and redesign practices.

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)

Infrastructure is absolutely key to tackling the effects of climate change, and we know that certain areas are likely to be worse affected than others. I am committed to improving the infrastructure in Queens which will protect our parks, natural areas, and waterfronts, and will ensure that areas such as the Rockaways will be safe. Our parks are the anchors of our neighborhoods, and over the past six years my office has allocated more than \$128 million toward upgrades and improvements across dozens of Queens parks and playgrounds.

10. Lead Poisoning Prevention (p. 9)

I will fight for a Green New Deal for public housing, and will ensure that all new developments are sustainable and safe for all our residents. Too many members of our community have been left behind and live in public housing that is unsafe and unsuitable, and we must do better. I will make sure that our residents, and particularly our children, are safe from lead poisoning and other housing issues that pose risks to health.

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

By protecting, maintaining, and expanding the city's urban forest I will ensure that all our residents, especially the elderly, are protected from heat vulnerability.

12. Clean Air for All (p. 10)

Alongside addressing other health issues which our residents and their children face due to emissions, I have several proposals which will make our air cleaner. Introducing an all-electric bus fleet and making the use of bicycles in our city safer and a realistic option for everyone, will reduce emissions and ensure that we all breathe cleaner air. By also continuing to protect our trees and green areas I will work to make sure that all possible options are made which will provide clean air for all.

13. Clean Water for All (p.11)

Last year the New York City Department of Health (DOH) took the final step to limiting maximum contaminant levels in water to ensure that all NY residents have clean and safe drinking water. I am thoroughly committed to ensuring that all our residents, especially communities of color which are most affected, have access to clean water. Through our proposed green new housing deals, we will make sure that our residents need not be worried that they or their children will become sick from the water they consume.

14. Sustainable Food Systems (p. 11)

I support the expansion of both community and commercial urban agriculture, and will work to ensure that all our residents have access to fresh and sustainable produce. I will work with schools to ensure that the youngest members of our community are taken care of in this regard, and that they have access to education and workshops on sustainability and health eating.