



30 Broad Street – 30th Floor
New York, NY 10004
212-361-6350

politics@nylcv.org / www.nylcv.org

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.

CAMPAIGN CONTACT INFORMATION

Candidate name: Shahana Hanif

Office sought & district number: New York City Council, District 39

Campaign e-mail: team@shahanafrombk.com

Campaign phone: 347-265-8859

Website: <https://www.shahanafrombk.com/>

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

Twitter handle: [@ShahanaFromBK](https://twitter.com/ShahanaFromBK)

Campaign manager's name and email: Nora Brickner, nora@shahanafrombk.com

Press Secretary's name and email: Please send all inquiries to team@shahanafrombk.com

Scheduler's name and email: Please send all inquiries to team@shahanafrombk.com

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'm running to represent District 39 because Kensington is my home and where my father arrived as a ship jumper 30 years ago from Bangladesh, settling in the largest working-class Bangladeshi enclave in Brooklyn. I am here because the climate crisis in Bangladesh forced my parents to migrate to the US. Many Bangladeshi families in Kensington, most from rural Sandwip, Chittagong, and Noakhali, have been displaced due to Bangladesh's climate disaster. What's happening in Bangladesh continues to impact and unearth climate challenges everywhere, continuing to hurt our most vulnerable communities first and worst. District 39 is a climate vulnerable district. Hurricane Sandy led to massive flooding in the Gowanus Canal and the surrounding neighborhoods, especially hurting NYCHA residents and working-class neighbors. The City has still not recovered from Sandy, and private developers continue to receive priority over the creation of resilient neighborhoods. I'm running for City Council because I understand the climate catastrophe frontline communities in our district and across

NYC are facing and will face in the coming years. I also understand the importance of connecting our struggles globally and locally across past, present, and future climate emergencies.

I was diagnosed with Lupus at age 17, a disease that developed because of environmental change and degradation. Social structures shape public health, and environmental stressors exacerbate the disproportionate impacts on vulnerable populations: growing up, I watched childhood friends and neighbors throughout Kensington get diagnosed with Tuberculosis. Living in cramped homes and public spaces with high pollution, more cars, and less open space increases the risk of chronic illness and inflammation and chronic illness for low income, immigrant, and/or BIPOC folks. These realities inform my advocacy work from organizing working-class Asian American NYCHA residents, to the creation of open spaces through neighborhood organizing, and centering climate projects for Participatory Budgeting. I run our District's Participatory Budgeting (PB) and have been intentional about centering marginalized voices in the PB process, and transferring power to youth and women of color in my district; I've advocated for funding towards projects that lead to a more equitable, green, open, and accessible built environment: from green roofs at the Windsor Terrace, Carroll Gardens, and Borough Park libraries, to better infrastructure in Prospect Park and playgrounds across the district. I advocated for Avenue C Plaza alongside my neighbors and will continue to fight for safe, clean, and accessible open spaces for District 39 constituents.

I'm committed to fighting locally for a Green New Deal, so we can have a city that serves as a model for cities all over the world, where everyone can live with dignity. I've been vocal about the need for a Green New Deal and climate action, because I have the lived experience to understand the gravity and intersectionality of the issues surrounding the climate crisis. During the historic climate strikes last year, I was proud to march with hundreds of New Yorkers to demand a liveable future. I've spoken up about the global scale of the climate crisis and its impact on my homeland, Bangladesh. I'm excited to be building my campaign with youth climate activists, including TREEage members, and young people from District 39 who have organized Youth For Shahana. Throughout my City Council campaign, I have championed and centered a feminist Brooklyn Green New Deal. As a City Council Member, I'll do the same and protectively partner with climate advocates to bring our GND demands to the forefront.

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 deeply committed to encouraging the shift to high efficiency, low emission forms of transportation. The key to decreasing our transportation emissions is to ensure that our City has reliable and accessible modes of public transportation and green transportation alternatives. This means improving the accessibility of our subways and buses, ensuring there are protected bike lanes to encourage more bike riding, and ensuring our streets are more accessible and pedestrian friendly.

Biking is an amazing green alternative; however, it is not accessible for all. As someone who has both arm and hip replacements, biking in the district and the City overall can be dangerous and falling and collapsing is a huge fear of mine. I was too afraid to bike on our streets because the City does not have adequate bike lanes, some streets are unpaved and others are known death traps. As Council Member, I aim to make biking more accessible and safer for all New Yorkers. I will work with the Department of Transportation to construct protected bike lanes throughout the district, particularly in Borough Park, a Priority Bicycle district, or area with high incidents of bicycle injuries or fatalities. In addition, I will work to fund bike shares and community education that is language accessible and culturally informed around biking. Bike cooperatives and cycling community education was a huge reason why I gained confidence in cycling in the City.

Making streets more accessible and pedestrian friendly means revitalizing our plaza programming, working with urban designers to implement traffic calming mechanisms like street trees, increasing open streets programming, and decreasing the presence of police in our streets and public spaces. This also means supporting food and drink vendors (financially and legislatively), block parties, plantings, community art, seating, and safe access to play spaces. Accessible streets and spaces are also safer for drivers, and more careful planning will ultimately decrease congestion and traffic incidents.

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 am deeply committed to conserving New York City's Parks and Natural Areas. While parks aren't always seen as part of the fight for racial and economic justice, the COVID-19 crisis demonstrated just how critical open spaces are to New Yorkers' health and well-being, particularly during our ongoing climate disaster. As a Council Member, I will fight for green space expansion, improvement, and preservation in vulnerable communities, including those in

my district. Urban green spaces not only provide much-needed open air during the pandemic, they also function as carbon sinks and can support neighborhood-level resiliency. I will work with organized labor to create green jobs via park stewardship, and I will allocate funding to proper park maintenance and public programming.

Much of my advocacy in District 39 centers around public space advocacy, including parks and natural areas. Between 2014 and 2016, I fought locally alongside The Kensington Stewards, a neighborhood association I co-founded, to transform an empty lot into the public Avenue C Plaza. Avenue C Plaza became one of the few viable open spaces for the Kensington community, especially for immigrant women and families, to utilize and enjoy safely. Within the district, particularly within Kensington and Borough Park, the lack of public parks and open spaces prevents community gatherings and children from playing. To activate the plaza with positive and inclusive programming for youth and families, I helped build a coalition of local arts organizations, which includes groups like Arts & Democracy, Casa Cultural, and the Bangladeshi Institute of Performing Arts. Through our work in the Kensington Cultural Council, we host community iftars during Ramadan, youth-led trainings and workshops, and solidarity rallies. Avenue C Plaza is a place of resistance, and I get to witness our youngest community members build friendships and create together.

During my time at Council Member Brad Lander’s office, I led Participatory Budgeting (PB) which helped fund much needed improvements and accessories in Prospect Park, which was a lifeline for me during the peak of COVID. Our neighbors advocated for freeze resistant water fountains in Prospect Park, which were funded through Participatory Budgeting. I am committed to making sure our parks and playground have working water fountains and public restrooms. PB has also funded more trees in the district. I hope to expand initiatives like PB to invest in environmental and public space related projects decided by neighbors.

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)

One of the central issues in my campaign is common sense waste management, and if elected, I hope to be the Chair of the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management. I will talk more about solid waste management in the section on solid waste management, but I want to underscore the importance of sustainable waste management as the center of our city’s climate mitigation strategy. Within waste management - I want to highlight organics collection.

In my district, access to organics collection was already uneven before this cycle of budget cuts. Neighborhoods like Park Slope have had curbside compost pick-up for years, and through the District 39 Participatory Budgeting process, we’ve created the largest community-based compost facility in Brooklyn at the Salt Lot in Gowanus. Meanwhile, my neighbors in Kensington don’t have nearby compost drop-off sites to recycle food scraps, while trash buildups continue throughout the district — including organics waste that could have been diverted from landfill if our city had a comprehensive compost system. Organics waste diversion is an essential tool in the fight across climate change at large, as organic waste in NYC contributed to 3.5% of the

city's greenhouse gas emissions in 2019. A lack of adequate waste management has been an issue in Kensington even before the pandemic - as the Department of Sanitation currently only provides trash cans on street corners. Loss of overhead for trash pickup is not a condition of COVID. Our neighbors have been picking up the slack for government failure for years. A failure to properly prioritize Kensington in waste management has led to more trash buildup throughout the pandemic, and we've had to call in programs like ACE New York to provide essential and needed sanitation services or rely on community members like the Kensington Stewards and Ocean Parkway Cleanup who have held neighborhood trash cleanups. As it stands, Participatory Budgeting funds trash cans in the district, and because the Department of Sanitation has restrictions about mid-block trash cans, local restaurants have to manage trash receptacles in the middle of the street. While ACE New York's presence is a good reminder of the viability of good, green sanitation and compost jobs in the district, we shouldn't rely on nonprofits and private organizations (or, the goodwill of community members) to keep our neighborhoods clean.

Instead, the Department of Sanitation should be funded to equitably clean up waste throughout different neighborhoods, prioritizing waste overburdened neighborhoods in pickup. Our city needs a citywide, mandatory composting program that will close these gaps and make sure all New Yorkers have easy access to composting, especially those living in neighborhoods most harmed by decades of environmental racism. Central to expanding our City's composting program is adequate outreach to multilingual communities and underserved communities such as NYCHA tenants. We also need to engage with our food related businesses (ex. restaurants, cafes, delis, grocery stores) to lessen food waste. We need to ensure that NYCHA buildings have adequate recycling and composting bins and we have to ensure that we sufficiently fund NYCHA to bring maintenance staff who can pick up waste in the buildings.

Reports from EJA-NYC have continually noted a lack of equity in terms of treatment of workers by private sanitation companies. We must monitor commercial and private sanitation companies better, and enforce transparency around waste collection and deposition. Private sanitation is also a public health threat to both workers and pedestrians, unsafe rigs and a lack of or dilapidated equipment are deadly to employees. It is also crucial to do more oversight and accountability on waste management and composting in the City. As Council Member, I aim to require the Department of Sanitation to release annual reports on their waste management equity plans and composting program effectiveness to ensure transparency and accountability with the agency.

The work of sanitation and public waste management is also the work of creating equitable and sociable public spaces. Much of my work as a gender justice organizer and as the Director of Organizing and Community Engagement for Council Member Brad Lander is creating accessible and permanent public spaces that are welcoming and inclusive, and foster a sense of community and public responsibility. Legislatively, we need to include small food businesses in the composting requirement. As Council Member, I will work with these businesses on composting outreach and encourage businesses to donate edible food to food pantries. We need to continue exploring upstream solutions, such as the Foam Ban and Plastic Bag Ban. Finally, I'd love to abolish private carting and explore a totally municipalized waste and sanitation system, but it's out of the purview of City Council unfortunately. Finally, we need to invest in circular economy initiatives like Materials for the Arts, FabScrap, and support zero-emission community composting projects like BK Rot and other micro-haulers to meet our zero waste goals equitably,

and create more unionized green jobs associated with expanding our waste infrastructure in the process.

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)

If elected, I will advocate against the North Brooklyn Pipeline, and other shareholder driven, environmentally damaging, and socially degrading energy projects, like fracking. In the City Council's effort to decarbonize and increase energy resiliency, making infrastructural changes is a promising approach to protecting our most vulnerable communities against the immediate dangers of climate change, like increased temperatures and flooding. This includes funding greening projects in District 39's apartment buildings, replacing peaker plants with solar power farms and other alternative sources, reducing urban heat islands, and retrofitting cool roofs on existing buildings — particularly community centers, libraries, and schools. In addition, I will advocate for the expansion of the green economy -- ensuring that the City contracts with union workers for any municipal green energy projects.

Democratizing our infrastructure has to be a priority – our energy supply should be publicly owned. New Yorkers are all too familiar with the unreliable, unaffordable, and unsustainable service provided by investor-owned utilities like National Grid and Con Edison. Moving to publicly owned power can lower costs for consumers, while also shifting our utilities away from their current lobbying against renewable energy that prioritizes their short-term profit over people and bring them into not only public ownership, but also the crucial work of decarbonizing our communities. If elected, I would push for publicly owned power, which would require collaboration and advocacy with my colleagues in the State Legislature. Locally, I will also support and fund community organizations, like UPROSE in Sunset Park, that build and maintain cooperatively owned energy infrastructure. I will also work with State and Federal representatives to support climate justice legislation and initiatives within New York City and New York State. Furthermore, I will work with Federal representatives, particularly ones who represent neighborhoods of District 39, to urge them to support Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Senator Ed Markey's Green New Deal.

6. Transportation (p. 5)

As I noted in my first answer, more accessible and usable public transportation will decrease our reliance on cars, decreasing air pollution. A huge barrier to using subways and buses is the lack of safety and accessibility - much of my transportation advocacy centers around accessibility because of my experiences with Access-A-Ride: accessible transportation is central to the fight against climate change.

District 39 has above ground subway stations with steep stairways and it is important to advocate for more accessible entrance ways. We need to ensure our stations are equipped with elevators and other infrastructure to increase accessibility such as elevators at the 7th Avenue Station. In addition, it is important to also decrease transportation deserts within the district. As Council Member, I will work with the Department of Transportation and other agencies to bring back the B71 bus to bring more transit options into transit desert pockets. Accessibility also means decreasing the cost of public transportation - I realize this is near-impossible through the role of City Council alone, but economic justice is central to my transit advocacy.

7. Resiliency (p. 6)

Consisting of many different waterfront communities, my district is incredibly vulnerable to the immediate risks of climate change. To build up New York City's resiliency, there must be a greater investment into green housing and infrastructure - to protect against flooding and greater risk of heat vulnerability. Increasing climate resiliency mandates advocating for an increase in affordable and public housing in the district, while ensuring that existing housing is preserved and protected from environmental hazards and the worst impacts of the climate crisis. As District 39's Council Member, I would advocate for an environmental justice special use district in Gowanus to prioritize environmental and social justice concerns: looking to the Minneapolis City Council's implementation of Green Zones that prioritize both public health impacts of environmental justice and investment in community development, I see exciting and transformational potential in land use processes that incorporate more stringent, racially conscious, community driven criteria.

Increasing resiliency in my District means rethinking the Gowanus rezoning- a history of poor land use policies, a superfund site, and natural disasters have led to consistent flooding, sewage overflows, and utility outages in Gowanus. The land use and planning process around the Gowanus Rezoning has actively excluded our most vulnerable constituents: NYCHA residents, low-income tenants, immigrant-owned small businesses, and Black and brown families facing displacement and those who are the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. As District 39's City Council Member, I would advocate for an environmental justice special use district to prioritize environmental and social justice concerns: looking to the Minneapolis City Council's implementation of Green Zones that prioritize both public health impacts of environmental justice and investment in community development, I see exciting and transformational potential in rezoning processes that incorporate more stringent, racially conscious, community driven criteria. A key planning outcome for Gowanus should be an increase in affordable and public housing in the district, while ensuring that existing housing is preserved and protected from environmental hazards and the worst impacts of the climate crisis. While the current rezoning plan seeks to increase diversity and affordable housing in the district, the rezonings in Downtown Brooklyn, Long Island City, and beyond have taught us that mitigation plans do not follow through on their promises, especially without thorough racial impact assessments.

I emphatically support a Green New Deal for Public Housing, which is very feasible on the Council level: the Climate Mobilization Act already introduces progressive green housing and infrastructural changes. I will simultaneously advocate for a Green New Deal for Public Housing at the federal level.

8. Solid Waste (p. 7)

There must be more funding allocated towards solid waste management.

Predominantly Black and brown, working class, and immigrant neighborhoods like Kensington are not prioritized in waste collection and other sanitation services. This is a public health concern, especially during a global pandemic. By sufficiently funding the Department of Sanitation and providing real oversight into the agency, we will be able to provide a thorough waste collection and management plan across all neighborhoods in the City. Furthermore, ensuring that private sanitation companies are held accountable for their treatment of workers means ensuring workers are unionized. Food waste leads to rodents, and increasing composting capacity and organics collection without proper maintenance, training, and education could lead to the increased presence of rodents and other pests where there is already trash buildup. To combat this, I will thoroughly monitor the efficacy of organics collection, ensuring and prioritizing neighborhood participation. Finally, I will explore better collaboration between individual homes, restaurants, and organic farms, continually promoting organics collection and sanitation education at neighborhood and community meetings.

Simply reinvesting into the Department of Sanitation is not enough and oversight and accountability is critical to ensuring that waste pickups are sufficient in waste overburdened or neglected neighborhoods. As Council Member, I will work to fund composting programs and any associated outreach, and will advocate for sanitation and waste programming. Regarding private sanitation and waste management companies, it is crucial that the City Council wisely uses its contracting power to ensure that we contract with companies that equitably treat their workers. Who the City contracts with is a reflection of where our policies stand, and as a Council Member, I will ensure that we contract with and spend our money on sanitation and waste management companies that will treat their workers in an equitable manner and will also work with the City on implementing a more equitable sanitation plan to ensure that all neighborhoods are able to remain waste free.

In addition, I will work to prioritize waste management projects and proposals in any Participatory Budgeting initiative in the district. Participatory Budgeting is an effective avenue in securing waste management infrastructure and resources such as more trash receptacles or doggy bag stations for the district's public spaces. Many of my Participatory Budgeting projects already center around the environment, public space, and mobility, all issues of environmental justice - and I will extend a lens of environmental justice to all projects, like yard improvements and indoor plant labs in elementary schools, or solar roofs on public libraries.

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)

I have an absolute commitment to well-funded and stewarded parks, natural areas, and active waterfronts. As District 39's Council Member, I will fund and partner with local arts and cultural



organizations to activate plazas and public spaces throughout the district, through open street public programming. I will create green jobs through park stewardship and allocate funding to proper maintenance and public programming. I will host community town halls in open spaces for constituents to speak out about issues that matter to them, particularly following hate crimes (our district has unfortunately seen an uptick in anti-Semitic and Islamophobic hate crimes after the Trump's election in 2016). One way I've brought Muslim and Jewish neighbors (such as Congregation Beth Elohim and Kolot Chayeinu) together is by organizing our annual Muslim women led Kensington community Iftar during Ramadan. It is not enough to show up for one another in response to hate crimes and xenophobic legislation. We must build intentionally beyond protests, and community celebrations rooted in love and safety are one way to actualize safety in solidarity.

As I said earlier in the form, I advocated and worked on the creation of the Avenue C Plaza to ensure that Kensington residents have access to open space. Since the creation of the Avenue C Plaza, it has been used as a gathering space for folks in the community. During Ramadan we use the Plaza as gathering space for Muslim community members and host a community-wide Iftar dinner. Leading with my neighbors to demand a public plaza for us and watching families enjoy the plaza gave me the insight on the importance of such spaces for constituents, especially for families. In tangible legislation, this could look like increasing programmatic funding to partner with local cultural organizations to activate plazas and public spaces throughout the district and through open street public programming. I will create green jobs through park stewardship, and I will allocate funding to proper maintenance and public programming. I will host community town halls in open spaces for constituents to speak out about issues that matter to them, particularly following hate crimes, as our public parks need to be safer, more accessible, and intentional about gender inclusion.

Land use in my district is in dire need of overhaul. The Gowanus Rezoning is the most urgent public land development in Brooklyn, and is in the heart of District 39. The Gowanus Canal Superfund site, within the rezoning, is in serious need of remediation, and while a public rezoning provides the City the opportunity to engage in radical reparative environmental justice, the City has failed to incorporate this thinking into the current plan. I am committed to continued oversight of the Superfund site cleanup and remediation and working closely with neighborhood based organizations like the Gowanus Canal Conservancy (GCC). GCC is part of the Gowanus Neighborhood Coalition for Justice that've put forth community demands for equitable rezoning. Further pollution of the canal is a serious possibility if the rezoning goes through. Thus, GNCJ will oppose the rezoning if the City does not share an environmental impact assessment and plans for transparent remediation and oversight.

10. Lead Poisoning Prevention (p. 9)

It is not enough to simply demand for more affordable housing. We need to ensure that our homes are safe, accessible, and habitable. This means preventing lead poisoning from impacting our neighbors, especially those in NYCHA and private housing in BIPOC, immigrant, and working class communities. According to the New York Times, 11,168 children tested positive for lead but the City has failed to do proper inspections of its buildings -- both public and private housing.

Our government needs to do better oversight and inspection of the buildings in the City. As Council Member, I will work to fully fund NYCHA to ensure that the agency can improve the efficiency of infrastructure improvements and inspections for its buildings, including lead paint inspections. We need to ensure that the City holds NYCHA accountable and ensures that improvements and inspections are being made. As Council Member, I will work to require reports on the number of lead inspections done at NYCHA buildings to ensure that lead inspections are getting done.

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

Yes. Heat resiliency is an urgent issue, particularly for seniors and those most at risk of heat vulnerability, like public housing residents. To resolve this, and best protect against heat vulnerability/increase heat resiliency, NYCHA must be fully funded to be able to properly retrofit buildings with green infrastructural improvements to be more heat resilient, weatherized, etc. However, it is not sufficient to simply defund and reinvest. We need to ensure that there is oversight, accountability, and transparency in how agencies spend their funds. For example, ensuring that funds allocated to NYCHA are spent on retrofitting and upkeep of open spaces rather than surveillance and carceral technologies such as security cameras or security guards. Heat resiliency could also look like pushing back against privatization of NYCHA land and advocating for green infrastructure and gardens for residents, and ensuring that the community centers in NYCHA buildings could act as cooling centers. I would also love to see monetary investment into financing community driven efforts to tackle heat resiliency across NYCHA developments, like Be a Buddy and other programs that partner with existing relational infrastructure, rather than relying on unpaid volunteers.

I'm particularly excited to implement and strengthen the City's Climate Mobilization Act. Within the Climate Mobilization Act, I find most promise and urgency around equipping smaller new buildings and community centers with green roofs (Int 276 and Int 1032). This has been a longstanding priority of mine as well, as I have mobilized community members to allocate funding to solar roofs on libraries throughout the District through Participatory Budgeting. Heat resiliency should be a leading legislative and constituent priority for more Council Members, especially because heat vulnerability impacts frontline communities, BIPOC, low income, and elderly community members most severely, and will only accelerate as temperatures increase and building infrastructure continues to crumble.

12. Clean Air for All (p. 10)

I emphatically support clean air for all. I've talked throughout this form about the public health impacts of climate change, and how they are deeply personal to me. To avoid repetition, in short, from decreasing the presence of high-emission vehicles, to proactively funding green buses and encouraging more usage of transportation alternatives, to increasing plantings and street trees, to adequately funding more open spaces and plazas, I am an advocate for clean air, and it is central to my climate advocacy.

13. Clean Water for All (p.11)



Clean water for all is a key priority for me, and I emphatically support Senator Elizabeth Warren's Blue New Deal and Councilmember Costa's Renewable Rikers and commitment to wastewater treatment plants. On a more hyperlocal level, I want to talk about how zoning procedure and local land use can have tangible impacts on clean water.

My district is along the waterfront and home to a superfund site, so combined sewage overflows (CSOs) and an incredibly toxic canal are the center of climate advocacy. As climate change continues to exacerbate CSOs and power outages and make natural disasters more damaging and more frequent, there must be greener solutions embedded within public land use procedures to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change, particularly clean and treated water. In Gowanus' rezoning process, achieving net zero combined sewage overflows despite new development is a key priority for many neighborhood activists and stakeholders. Despite this true urgency, residents have noted and protested a lack of transparency regarding the environmental impact statement throughout the rezoning process. I want greener solutions to combat the impacts of climate change such as creating an environmental justice special district, working with local environmental groups on how to achieve net zero combined sewage overflows, and releasing the required environmental impact statement earlier to ensure the community has sufficient time to give feedback. Concerns around building in Gowanus open up a larger conversation on the quality of public housing - our public housing should be resilient to flooding, resilient to heat vulnerability, full of green spaces to decrease air pollution, and be continually retrofitted to meet environmental and social demands. The rezoning process is a call for greater investment in our public infrastructure, because much of our City is environmentally degraded and will continue to be, unless we introduce a Green New Deal for Public Housing.

14. Sustainable Food Systems (p. 11)

Creating sustainable food systems is central to food justice. Creating a more sustainable food system requires: (1) food waste management, (2) sourcing food from ethical farms, and (3) expanding more sustainable food options in our public schools.

As Council Member, I will work to fund composting programs and outreach to reduce food waste. I will work to ensure that the City contracts with only sustainable and ethical food providers. I will support and vote for legislation to increase regulations, inspections and reporting requirements for live animal markets and other similar facilities, and increase penalties for health code or animal cruelty violations because I acknowledge both the public health issue for workers and the ethical issue of humanely using animals for food. However, any legislation that calls for this regulation, accountability, and oversight by the City must also not result in the over-policing of live markets and facilities owned by folks of color. I will also work to expand food justice in our public schools - focusing on providing Halal, Kosher, and plant-based meals in school cafeterias. Students who are vegetarian, vegan, or cannot consume meat/meat products for dietary/ethical reasons should be able to have access to a variety of plant-based meals. In addition, expanding plant-based meals in cafeterias can open up conversations among students about consuming less meat/meat products and why plant-based meals can be important for animal ethics and sustainability.