

How would you use this position to improve policing in New York? Do you support cutting NYPD funding in order to reallocate funds towards needed services and social programs? Where would you reallocate the funds, if so? What concrete policies would you advocate for to improve policing in NY? \*

We can and must transform how we achieve public safety in New York City, so that we can keep all New Yorkers safe, reduce overreliance on policing, end abusive and racially discriminatory policing, and better support all communities to thrive.

I was the first City Council Member to call for an NYPD hiring freeze in April 2020, believing we should not be hiring new officers if we were not hiring new teachers. I approached this year's budget with simple principles in mind: Divest at least \$1 billion from policing to preserve as much investment as we possibly could in education, youth, and social services. Prioritize public health to get us through the pandemic. Invest in a just recovery. And take a smart, long-term approach to our city's economic and fiscal health. I voted no on the FY21 budget because it did not come close to meeting those principles. We need to move away from having policing as the primary response for every problem, from homelessness to mental health to gender-based violence to traffic safety, and, instead, must invest in the resources that do better to keep all communities safe.

I support removing police from many aspects of the city's public life, including homelessness, drug use, overdose, and mental health, because they demonstrably fail to deliver good public health and public safety outcomes, particularly for our BIPOC neighbors. Instead, we need to develop the alternative infrastructure for non-police response. To that end, I recently released a campaign platform that proposes removing the NYPD from routine traffic enforcement and decriminalizing or eliminating minor pedestrian and cyclist infractions, among other recommendations. See here: <https://www.landerfornyc.com/traffic-safety>

Taking a data-driven, problem-solving, restorative approach to reducing traffic violence has enormous potential to save lives, prevent injuries, save money, and make our streets safer for all New Yorkers -- and to demonstrate the value of a public health approach to public safety.

One other critical area for savings, especially relevant to the Comptroller's office, are the hundreds of millions of dollars that we pay out each year to settle claims against the City. The top two areas of claims are police misconduct and traffic crashes caused by City drivers. By combining the Comptroller's settlement responsibilities, audits, and data analysis, we can take an "early warning" approach to holding city agencies and workers accountable, and thus save both lives and money.

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Downtown Democratic Club Candidate Survey: Comptroller <https://docs.google.com/forms/u/0/d/1i6fNySRAq5Ww0L2zxN...>

How would you go about creating more affordable housing in New York? What about permanent housing for New York's homeless population? Where would you put it? How would you make sure it's actually affordable and sustainable? Would you ever support upzoning in order to create it? Will you accept money from real estate interests? Please be specific on your proposals. \*

Our current approaches to development, planning, and housing have failed to address systemic inequities, promote fairness, listen proactively to communities, use equity as a lens, align land-use planning with infrastructure investment, or face up to the climate crisis. Proposals for new housing are generally developer-driven, piecemeal, and too often concentrated in neighborhoods of color without concern for displacement or gentrification. Since these proposed rezonings are driven by developers' profit motive, they fail to center the deeply affordable and supportive housing that is necessary to provide homes for those who need them most, and to move aggressively to end homelessness.

I have been one of the leading voices for comprehensive citywide planning, with a strong role for communities, and grounded in values of equity, affordability, and sustainability. A comprehensive citywide plan would guide the creation of new affordable, supportive, and social housing, shelters, schools, social services, and infrastructure in ways that minimize displacement risks and maximize access to opportunity. This long-term strategic vision, informed by real public input, would help ensure fair distribution of development and resources throughout the city and prioritize resiliency, fairness, equity, and access to permanently affordable housing.

In my own backyard, I have worked to model this approach, in our extensive, decade-long community planning for Gowanus. I am open to supporting the Gowanus Neighborhood Rezoning if it meets the community's reasonable and long-standing goals (see: <https://council.nyc.gov/brad-lander/gowanus-neighborhood-rezoning/>) I have also taken the lead on several occasions in welcoming homeless shelters, supportive, and affordable housing to our district.

To address the affordability housing crisis in a way that does not rely heavily on private developers, I propose to expand the footprint of "social housing" -- community land trusts, limited equity cooperatives, and mission-driven nonprofit rentals -- which is permanently affordable, immune to the speculative pressures of the real estate market, and can be targeted to those who need it most. I will be releasing shortly a comprehensive social housing platform, which will call for requiring that all City-owned land that is disposed for housing go to social housing entities, that City subsidies for housing development be distributed equally between for-profit developers and non-profit ones (currently it is 80% to for-profits), and

that we grow the footprint of social housing from 10% of the city's housing market now (mostly NYCHA) to 20% (with a more robust mix of community-land trusts, limited equity cooperatives, and nonprofit rental and supportive housing) in the years to come.

I am the only candidate in the race who has committed not to take contributions from for-profit real estate developers or large rental property owners (as well as contributions from private equity or hedge fund managers, fossil fuel executives, or for-profit lobbyists). I have returned all for-profit developer and real estate money that was offered.

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Do you support taxing the wealthy? What specific tax policy changes would you support in New York State and New York City to increase State and City revenue? How will you, at the same time, restore NYC's economic health, employment, tax base, and small businesses, both short-term and long? \*

Yes. We must fight for progressive revenue in Albany. Only the State Legislature has the power to require shared sacrifice -- to tax billionaires, close the carried interest loophole for private equity income, explore a stock transfer tax, impose a pied-a-terre tax, and/or restore the commuter tax, as outlined at [www.makebillionairespay.info](http://www.makebillionairespay.info). All of these progressive revenue strategies are off-limits to New York City without action by the State Legislature. Those resources could address the State's budget gap, a restore cuts in foundation aid, public education support, and funding for health and human services to cities.

However, New York City is not helpless. In times of fiscal crisis, Keynesian economics instructs us to utilize long-term debt to invest in infrastructure, affordable housing, economic development and job creation (e.g. in sustainable urban innovation, technology, mobility, manufacturing the care economy, etc), and in climate resilience through a green new deal. New York City has meaningful room to increase our capital budget by several billion dollars, while still keeping debt service below the 15% of revenues threshold. A stimulus package of this type will prompt job creation and economic stimulus, create tens of thousands of jobs, and provide the platform for sustainable economic growth for decades to come.

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How should we desegregate our schools? Do you support eliminating the SHSAT? Do you support admissions screens? What concrete changes would you make to our public school system? \*

In 2014, I passed the School Diversity Accountability Act which shined a light on how segregated our schools are, and helped to launch the Alliance for School Integration and Desegregation. Using the data from the SDAA, in partnership with a community organizing campaign that included student activism through Integrate NYC and other advocates, I helped to lead a process to adopt a bold integration plan for the middle-schools of Brooklyn's Community School District 15, which has been strongly successful for families across our district in its first two years. That model is now being expanded citywide as middle-screens have been suspended during the pandemic.

I support eliminating the SHSAT as the sole determinant of entry to the specialized high schools and to overhauling the high school admissions process more broadly to combat segregation. I have worked closely with Integrate NYC and Teens Take Charge for many years to advocate for an elimination of biased screens that promote and exacerbate segregation.

Throughout my tenure as a City Council Member, I have been a strong advocate for our city's public schools,

bringing a wide range of data to work in partnership with advocates. I've fought for additional resources for guidance counselors and increased social and emotional learning, and for safer and more improved conditions in school buildings. Using a data-driven approach, I led the campaign that secured air-conditioning in all NYC school classrooms, shining a spotlight on the fact that 25% of classrooms did not have A/C, making it #TooHotToLearn for hundreds of thousands of students. I would bring that same dogged fight to the Comptroller's office, auditing and analyzing ways that our education system is failing our students and teachers, and engaging in organizing campaigns to win change. As New York City Comptroller, I will continue to fight for education equity, integration, and success in teaching and learning by rooting out inefficiencies, corruption, and DOE policies that harm our students and maintain the status-quo.

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Downtown Democratic Club Candidate Survey: Comptroller <https://docs.google.com/forms/u/0/d/1i6fNySRAq5Ww0L2zxN...>

What is the path forward on corrections reform? Do you support closing Rikers? Do you support constructing new, borough-based jails? In all boroughs or just some of them? Do you support bail reform? Did you support the recent partial roll back of bail reform? \*

I believe passionately that we must close Rikers Island and do more aggressive decarceral work to reduce the number of people held in our City jails. As one of the first City Council Members to support the #CloseRikers movement in 2016, I have been marching, bearing witness, and organizing in this cause ever since.

As a sitting Council Member, I voted for the plan to build four new borough-based jails in October 2019, as part of this effort to close Rikers. It was a vote I did not take lightly and that came after many conversations with advocates and community members. I voted for the plan, which was significantly improved thanks to sustained organizing, because I believed it represented by far the most likely way to close Rikers, to dramatically reduce the number of people we incarcerate pre-trial, and to do so in far less inhumane conditions. I feared then, as I do now, that if the Council rejected the plan, the approximately 17,500 cages on Rikers, so many in abominable conditions, would remain open indefinitely. I explained my decision -- and my discomfort with voting to build new jails -- in detail here: <https://council.nyc.gov>

As someone who voted for the plan, I have felt a particular responsibility to work for further decarceral reforms to reduce the jail population. When the first incarcerated person at Rikers tested positive for COVID-19 in March, I called for the release of all at-risk individuals being held on the island. Later in March, I organized a press conference in front of the Metropolitan Detention Center with Congressmembers Nadler, Jeffries, and Velasquez, to call on federal courts to stop processing certain arrests and to release all at-risk individuals from federal prison. Additionally, I supported the bail reform fight in Albany and loudly protested the roll-backs. As Comptroller, I would audit the cross-agency steps necessary to close Rikers, hold us accountable to this critical goal, and be an active partner in the work to decarcerate New York City.

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How can New York lead on climate change? Are there any green energy projects we can pursue? Do you support any of the existing pipeline proposals? How can we leverage our financial and economic power to encourage other jurisdictions to be better on the climate? \*

The climate crisis is the greatest long-term risk to the health of our communities, the soundness of our infrastructure, the stability of our finances, the capacity of our democracy, and the lives of New Yorkers. It also holds immense economic opportunity to create high-quality green jobs that can steer us out of this recession towards a just recovery. I will make the Comptroller's office a central hub for focusing the attention of New Yorkers on the climate crisis, bringing all the tools of the office to this existential fight.

As fiduciary of the pension funds, I will complete responsible divestment from oil, gas, and coal corporations, join and lead strategic alliances of shareholders to compel bold climate action by publicly traded corporations (utilities, banks, car and technology companies), help address financing gaps, and provide investment for the transition to clean energy.

As the city's chief fiscal officer, I will assess the financial risks that the climate crisis poses for our city's

future, and use that analysis to transform the city's spending, contracting, banking, and infrastructure to mitigate climate risk and create economic opportunities.

As the city's chief accountability officer, I will establish a new, dedicated audit team to focus on agency sustainability and environmental justice performance, hold public- and private-sector actors to NYC's ambitious clean energy targets, and bird-dog the city's oft-neglected investments in coastal resilience and climate readiness.

As an innovator in public engagement, I will work in partnership with NYC's communities to build democratic and equitable solutions from the ground up, and offer accessible ways for New Yorkers of all backgrounds to participate in the transition to a sustainable economy.

New York City can and must be a leader in winning – and implementing – a Green New Deal before it's too late. As New York City Comptroller, I will help lead the way.

As Comptroller, I will work to create a large-scale program that installs rooftop solar and wind turbines on public and private property citywide (using city capital dollars, low-interest loan funds, and direct city installation) in order to help take pressure off the city's overextended energy grid, wean the city off of fossil fuels, create high-quality jobs, and develop a municipally-owned network of renewable energy sources. I commit to oppose any new fossil-extractive infrastructure in the region, including any pipeline projects.

Additional information can be found in my climate platform: [landerfornyc.com/climate](http://landerfornyc.com/climate)

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Downtown Democratic Club Candidate Survey: Comptroller <https://docs.google.com/forms/u/0/d/1i6fNySRAq5Ww0L2zxN...>

How will you improve procurement and contracting? How do we cut waste, and how do we make sure women- and minority-owned businesses get a fair shake in the procurement process? \*

There are a number of ways I propose to improve the procurement and contracting process (and the oversight and enforcement of contracts), in order to reduce waste, save money, get projects done on time, help MWBEs win bids, and better protect workers.

At present, the procurement process remains opaque, as there is no way for the public, the press, or even the Comptroller to systematically track contracts through the process or make data-driven plans for meaningful reform. While the city's new PASSPort establishes a digital procurement system, it does not include public tracking or time limits. So I am pleased to be one of the early co-sponsors of Intro 1627, which would require the Mayor's Office of Contract Services to develop an online platform to track contracts from bid award to registration, and set time limits for each step of the procurement process. This legislation would complement Local Law 37 of 2020, for which I was prime sponsor, which requires the city to create a universal capital projects tracking database, in order to provide far better oversight of city-contracted capital construction projects (and which is discussed in more detail below, in response to Question #11). These

new databases will be critical tools for systemic reform. As Comptroller, I will establish an audit team to review the new contracts and capital projects data on a regular and comparative basis in order to identify waste, save money, and get projects done on time.

The city's construction contracts and subcontracts hold enormous opportunities for the city's MWBE businesses. And we've made some good progress on expanding MWBE contracting over the last few years. But the city's notoriously delayed payments to contractors significantly discourages MWBEs – who already face enormous barriers to accessing capital – from doing business with the city. The City's late payments and burdensome contracting requirements are especially challenging for smaller, less resourced MWBEs (who are far less likely to contract with the City than larger, better capitalized MWBEs), undermining the city's efforts to help grow and develop MWBE business capacity citywide. Intro 1627 will go a long way to address this. In addition, I will support the significant expansion of MWBE support initiatives, including the MWBE mentorship program now authorized by State law to better support and develop smaller, entrepreneurial MBWE businesses.

Additionally, the Comptroller's contract review process can be used to weed out vendors with repeat histories of violating prevailing wage laws and occupational health and safety regulations. Toward this end, I will pioneer a new effort, on the model of the Public Advocate's annual "10 Worst Landlords" list, to publish a "10 Most Abuse Employers," calling out corporations with a track record of violating wage and hour, health and safety, fair work week, and other worker protection laws.

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What is your plan to save small businesses? How do we make sure, when we come back from COVID, our local businesses are still here? And how do we make sure the enormous amount of commercial vacancies get filled, and not just by big chains snatching up cheap leases? \*

Our small businesses are facing a true emergency. So many restaurants, coffee shops, bookstores, neighborhood gyms, retail stores, and other beloved, independently-owned neighborhood treasures have already closed. While many have been creative in staying afloat throughout the crisis, the toll – and especially the rent burden – is simply too great. If we do not take immediate action, we are going to see a much broader wave of closures.

For many small businesses, rent is the number one expense, and over the past year their rent arrears have grown too large to pay. Unfortunately, the large majority of commercial owners have not been willing or able to provide meaningful rent relief or concessions to their small business tenants. If rent restructuring does not take place soon, an untold number of these beloved and economically critical small businesses will permanently close, leading to massive job loss.

To address this crisis, I developed a plan for a “Small Business Recovery Lease Program” that would offer landlords a 10-year property tax abatement in exchange for entering into a “recovery lease” with their small business tenants that would settle past-due arrears, limit yearly rent increases, and provide a stable, affordable lease for at least 10 years. I am working with State Senator Brian Kavanagh, Assembly Member Yuh-Line Niou, and Council Member Keith Powers to turn the plan into reality. The proposal requires authorization from Albany via S8904 and A10936 and then the creation of the program at the city-level. We are hopeful that when the State Legislature goes back into session this month they will take up this urgent proposal. I also support an array of other proposals in Albany to address the small business crisis, including the Hoylman/Epstein proposal for rent relief (funded by the federal government), and the Carroll proposal to require insurance companies to pay out on business interruption claims.

## Comptroller • Section II

From what types of assets that NYC currently holds would you divest? \*

As fiduciary of the pension funds, I will complete responsible divestment from oil, gas, and coal corporations to help end fossil fuel extraction before we destroy our planet. I support existing prohibitions on investment in private prisons and handguns. Through a Strategic Plan for Responsible Investment, conducted in partnership with the trustees of the pensions funds and the retirees and workers whose money this is, I would evaluate other assets, including private equity/real estate funds, predatory subprime lending, and corporations with excessively poor labor histories.

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Other than divestment, how would you use the Comptroller’s office to push progressive change within NYC and beyond its borders? Give some concrete examples. \*

Shareholder actions and proxy resolutions are important tools of the Comptroller’s Office, especially in coordination with broader grassroots, labor, and environmental organizing. I will build on the work of Comptroller Stringer’s Boardroom Accountability Project which has increased proxy access for shareholder proposals, required more disclosure of corporate boards, and required consideration of both women and people of color for every open board seat. Stringer’s recent campaign to prevent Exxon CEO Lee Raymond from renewing his seat on the board of JPMorgan provides a powerful example of how the Comptroller can go further to leverage the city’s position as a major institutional investor to meaningfully combat the climate crisis through corporate reform. I look forward to building on this work, and taking it in even more ambitious directions. Through my proposal for a Strategic Plan for Responsible Investing, I will undertake a process of education, outreach, and consensus building for action in partnership with the pension fund trustees, and the retirees and workers, to whom these funds belong.

As I have done in my work as the co-founder and chair of Local Progress, a national network of local progressive elected officials, I will network with progressive leaders, major institutional investors, labor unions, and democratic treasurers and Comptrollers across the country to expand the impact of this work. Through ambitious shareholder action, we can do more to hold corporate executives accountable, protect and empower employees, increase transparency, expand economic democracy (e.g. through worker and community stakeholder positions on corporate boards), prevent short-term profit-taking through stock buybacks, and advance shared long-term goals of equity and sustainability.

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The NYC budget has an enormous amount of waste. That money could be used to provide better services for New Yorkers. Why are you the right person to find that waste and cut it down? \*

For the past decade, I have been the Council's strongest champion for reforming the city's management of capital projects to weed out inefficiencies, eliminate waste, get projects done on time, and save billions of dollars. The city spends over \$10 billion each year on much-needed capital projects. But this spending fails to meet New Yorkers' most basic needs due to poor planning and project management, ballooning costs, complicated bureaucracies, outdated State laws, insufficient oversight, and a lack of coordination between city agencies. Research completed by my Council office found that over half of the city's major capital projects ran over-budget and behind schedule. And the process by which the city decides where and how to spend billions of capital dollars each year fails to prioritize the infrastructure and neighborhoods that need it most, leaving many low-income and communities of color neglected for decades. More here: <https://council.nyc.gov/brad-lander/nyc-capital-project-reform/>

I created the first capital projects tracking system at the City Council district level and pushed the Parks Department to create its Parks Capital Tracker. In 2020, I passed legislation that requires the city to create a comprehensive, citywide Capital Projects Tracker citywide—a critical first step toward increasing accountability and efficiency in how the city spends billions in taxpayer dollars. As Comptroller, I will build on this work and establish a dedicated team within the Comptroller's Audit Bureau to focus on the capital projects management reform the city desperately needs to get the most out of our capital dollars and ensure projects are completed on-budget and on-schedule.

A data-driven approach to rooting out inefficiencies, identifying waste, and making government work better is what I've spent my career doing and I look forward to bringing that perspective to the Comptroller's Office -- not only to the management of City capital projects, but to the entire City budget.

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How do you plan on continuing to build NY City's funds in the midst of a potential economic downturn? Is there a way in which you can do this while pushing the progressive ideologies that we value in NYC and the surrounding metro area? \*

In the wake of the fiscal crisis of the 1970s, New York City adopted austerity budgeting, making large cuts to CUNY, NYCHA, mass transit, and a wide array of other public services. The result, as Kim Phillips Fein writes in *Fear City*, crippled New York City's ability to serve as an engine of upward social mobility, put downward pressure on wage, expanded inequality to the point of crisis, and paved the way for gentrification.

But austerity was not inevitable then, and it is not inevitable now. In the wake of earlier crises, including the Great Depression and World War II, our city's leaders helped to pioneer urban investments in clean water

and public health, public transportation, the programs of the New Deal, public housing and Mitchell-Lama, and public higher education. Those investments, grounded in Keynesian economics, were the platform for our city's growth and success for many decades.

Now, in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis, amidst a reckoning with systemic racism and inequality, and with the climate crisis on the horizon, it is our time to renew this forward-looking leadership. It is appalling to live in a country where, during a global pandemic, a handful of billionaires have seen their wealth grow by over half-a-trillion dollars, while tens of millions wait in line for food, 40 million have filed for unemployment, we have refused to provide any relief to millions of immigrant families, small businesses face devastation, and millions of tenants cannot afford to pay their rent.

The New York City Comptroller has the responsibility to tell the truth about our finances, to make sure that our budget is balanced, and to find ways to make our agencies work more effectively with the resources we have. I've made those hard choices in the past as a member of the City Council. But that does not mean supporting austerity, or ignoring rampant inequality. Investing in better-shared, more sustainable prosperity, and working hard to strengthen the capacity of city government to help deliver it, is the best way forward for our city. As New York City Comptroller, that will be my north star. More on my vision for a just economic recovery from COVID-19 here: <https://www.landerfornyc.com/just-recovery>

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In regards to the NYC pension plans, what is your commitment to awarding City business/contracts to supporting women and minority-owned financial businesses - trading, asset management, auditing, accounting, etc? What about using the pension plans to make environmentally/ESG-friendly investments?

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The New York City Comptroller has a critical role to play in holding all city agencies accountable to their MWBE obligations, but there is no way for the office to play that role meaningfully if it is not practicing what we preach. So it is especially critical to make progress to address ongoing disparities in its own contracting for pension fund advisers, asset managers, bond underwriters, auditors, consultants, and other firms contracted by the Comptroller's office. The current and recent Comptroller's have made progress here, but there remains a long way to go. I am committed to honestly addressing existing

disparities and doing everything possible to end them.

In addition to consultant and contract positions, Black, Indigenous and POC New Yorkers face barriers when it comes to accessing capital for start-ups and new business ventures that create high-quality jobs and support the city's long-term economic recovery. As Comptroller, I will explore new ways to invest our city's pension funds into NYC-based MWBE start-ups, entrepreneurs and small businesses, particularly in neighborhoods where there are significant barriers to accessing start-up funds. Additionally, I would continue and grow the current Comptroller's MWBE University offerings and plan to launch an Equity Audits initiative to reduce disparities across race, gender and ethnicity citywide, including in how our city agencies deliver services, treat their workers and hire contractors.

In order to advance ESG investing, to achieve risk-adjusted, market-rate returns to insure retirement security for City workers and retirees through investments that are better aligned with our values, I will soon be releasing a plan to undertake a "Strategic Plan for Responsible Investing." Through this process, we will proactively engage pension fund trustees, members (i.e. the people whose money this is), and other stakeholders in a process of education, dialogue, and consensus-building. Right now, much ESG work is reactive and narrow, responding ad hoc to a particular issue demand, rather than developing a comprehensive plan for aligning investments with values. As a result, investment advisers are forced into a reactive position, limiting their options, as well as their ability to coordinate with other actors. Through this process, I will work with the pension fund trustees to develop and commit to responsible plans for expanded shareholder action, targeted divestment where appropriate, and increasing the amount of money put into Economically Targeted Investments (for purposes including of affordable housing, economic development in NYC neighborhoods, and renewable energy, including through an large-scale expansion of solar power, funded through a mix of city capital, pension fund assets, and other investments, with potential to create a clean-energy municipal utility).

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Is there anything else you would like us to know about you?

With recent endorsements from the New York Working Families Party, Make the Road Action, VOCAL Action, New York Communities for Change, and Lambda Independent Democrats, as well as a growing and diverse array of elected officials (current list here: <https://www.landerfornyc.com/endorsements>), our campaign is building a broad progressive coalition. We are putting forward the most ambitious and detailed policy proposals of any candidate in the race, with plans coming soon on social housing, ESG investing, equity audits, technology, capital projects management, and much more. I have enjoyed getting to know many of VID's members and believe we share the same passion for building a strong Democratic party rooted in racial, social, and economic justice and for a more progressive and livable New York City. I'd be really honored to receive VID's endorsement and to partner with you all in the long, hard, urgent, hopeful years ahead.

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