



2025 Primary Candidate Questionnaire - New York City Council

Citizens Union - Local Candidates Committee

GENERAL INFORMATION

Candidate info

Name	Antirson Ricardo Ortiz
City Council District #	17
In which primary	<div>Democratic</div> <div>Working Families</div>
Age	37
Education	B.S in Political Science
Current job, position, or occupation	Director of Constituent Services at the Office of NYC Comptroller Brad Lander

Other positions or offices

NY State Committeeman 85th Assembly District

Previous jobs or positions

Bronx Borough Liaison
NYC Comptroller Scott M. Stringer
2017 - 2019

Office Manager
New York State Assemblyman Marcos A. Crespo
2015 - 2017

Youth Counselor/Advisor
UNITAS Therapeutic Community, Inc.
2011 - 2015

Executive Assistant Youth Coordinator
Mirabal Sisters Cultural and Community Center
2007 - 2011

Campaign contact information

Website	ortizforthebronx.com
Instagram	https://www.instagram.com/ortiz_antirson/?hl=en
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/antirson.ortiz/

Other social media platforms

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/antirson-ortiz-58a512a8>

INTRODUCTION

1. What are your top three campaign promises or goals, and what action will you take to achieve them if elected?

Promise 1: Building a Safer Community- As a South Bronx resident since 1997 and an NYPD Auxiliary Police Officer for nearly a decade, I recognize the urgency of addressing rising crime. If elected, I am committed to investing in violence intervention and prevention programs while fostering stronger relationships between the community and law enforcement

Promise 2: Affordable Housing and Homeownership for all- I am committed to collaborating with housing organizations and policy experts to make meaningful investments in affordable housing, homeownership and ending our homelessness crisis. We must halt unreasonable rent hikes, build true affordable housing for all, hold landlords accountable for deceptive practices that force constituents out of rent-stabilized units, and invest in programs that create pathways to homeownership.

Promise 3: Empowering our Youth and fighting for a better Educational System- If elected, I am committed to investing and working with educators in the usage of more multi-systemic and evidence based approaches to target our educational crisis.

2. If elected, what is the first piece of legislation you would introduce? Why is that your top priority? If you are an incumbent, please also state what legislation you have passed which you are most proud of.

If elected, the first piece of legislation I would introduce would be a comprehensive Affordable Housing and Rent Stabilization Act. This bill would focus on immediate and long-term solutions to address our housing crisis, including halting unreasonable rent hikes, implementing stronger rent control measures, holding landlords accountable for deceptive practices and expediting rental assistance vouchers for people facing homelessness.

This is my top priority because affordable housing is the foundation of a thriving, stable community. Without it, families struggle to make ends meet, individuals face the risk of displacement, and it affects the socio-economic dynamic of our city.

3. In your view, what are the major needs of your district's constituents?

The major needs of my district's constituents are deeply rooted in the essential aspects of daily life: affordable and low-income housing, public safety, access to quality education, mental health services, economic opportunities, and addressing food insecurity.

4. How long have you lived in the district in which you are running, and do you have any achievements or involvement in your neighborhood you are particularly proud of?

I have proudly resided in my neighborhood since 1997, and as a product of the public education system, I have dedicated my life to grassroots organizing and community service. Currently, I serve as the State Committeeman for the 85th NYS Assembly District, which represents my area. My professional experience spans several roles, including Office Manager for Assemblyman Marcos A. Crespo, Bronx Borough Liaison for former NYC Comptroller Scott M. Stringer, NYPD Auxiliary Police Officer, and my current position as Director of Constituent Services for NYC Comptroller Brad Lander. Every one of these positions has been

deeply connected to my community or directly representing my neighborhood.

Throughout my career, I have had the privilege of achieving many milestones, such as advocating for the implementation of traffic lights, speed bumps, and other essential city services. However, I am most proud of the cohort of young professionals I have mentored since they were children. Today, they are inspired by my work and continue to uplift our community, carrying forward the values of service and leadership that I have dedicated my life to.

5. What experience have you had with good government and reform issues? (e.g., voting and election reform, campaign finance, ethics, police accountability, government transparency). If you've worked to advance these goals, we'd love to hear about it.

Throughout my career, I have played a pivotal role in resolving and assisting constituents with thousands of quality-of-life concerns. As Director of Constituent Services at the Office of the Comptroller, I have worked to advance government transparency and accountability by ensuring our constituents receive the best possible services from City agencies, assisting over 30,000 families annually. In this role, I have also advised the office on various citywide socio-economic issues, which have contributed to the implementation of audits and policy reports.

As a former Auxiliary Police Officer, I worked closely with our coordinator and the community to bridge the gap between policing and the people we serve. I helped coordinate and executed several events, such as The Autism Walk at the 41st Precinct and food distribution for those facing homelessness in our community.

6. What do you think the role of the City Council is in city government this upcoming term?

The role of the City Council in city government during this upcoming term is to serve as a vital check and balance and a guide for many NYC constituents, who currently feel a lack of hope and meaning in government. The Council must ensure that we prioritize passing legislation that addresses the city's most pressing issues, such as public safety, affordable housing, economic development, and education.

We must continue to work collaboratively with community organizations, local stakeholders, and colleagues in other branches of government to craft solutions that are both practical and inclusive. By doing so, we can rebuild trust in government and ensure that policies reflect the needs of all New Yorkers.

ELECTIONS AND VOTING

7. Do you support moving New York City's elections from odd-numbered years to even-numbered years, and will you co-sponsor a Council Resolution supporting that measure?

Yes

Voter turnout in New York City elections is exceptionally low, as they are held “off-cycle” in odd-numbered years. To boost local voter turnout and reduce participation gaps, the Legislature passed and Governor Hochul signed a law that moves county and town elections to even-numbered years, and lawmakers are supporting a constitutional amendment that would do the same for city elections, including New York City’s. Citizens Union is [leading a coalition of groups advocating](#) to move New York City’s elections to even-numbered years, and the City Council is considering a [Resolution in support](#) of that shift.

8. The New York City Board of Elections (NYC BOE) has been a source of frustration for voters and candidates for years. The City Council appoints NYC BOE members and has the power to appoint commissioners who are committed to reform, but the most recent commissioners have been appointed behind closed doors. Do you commit to request a public hearing for BOE nominees, and to only vote for individuals who are publicly committed to reducing party-based patronage and supporting open hiring practices?

Yes

9. Do you support maintaining the use of Ranked Choice Voting in New York City’s elections?

Yes

10. New York City is one of the few cities that maintains a closed primary system, in which only registered party members can vote in the primary election. Do you believe New York City should shift to a form of completely open primaries, allowing all registered voters to vote in one primary where the top two candidates, regardless of party, move on to the general election?

Yes

*** In the box below, you may provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to improve elections and voting in New York City.**

To improve elections and voting in New York City, I am committed to advocating for policies that make our process more transparent and prioritize voter education in underserved communities. Since an early age, I have been a passionate advocate for these reforms. I have visited colleges, high schools, and community organizations, where I’ve shared my personal story and, more importantly, educated residents on the significance of local elections. Ensuring that every individual understands the power of their vote and the impact of local elections is key to fostering a more engaged and informed electorate

CAMPAIGN FINANCE

11. Individuals with business ties to city government and registered lobbyists can bypass their donation limits by “bundling” donations from other people. Do you support limiting bundling by people on the Doing Business with the City database?

Yes

12. Are you a supporter of the City’s public campaign matching funds program, and do you commit to protecting the independence of the program and ensuring that the Campaign Finance Board has sufficient resources to run the program?

Yes

*** In the box below, you may provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to improve New York City’s campaign finance system.**

To improve New York City’s campaign finance system, I am committed to advocating for greater transparency and easier accessibility. It’s essential that we build a system that not only encourages fairness but also fosters public trust. By increasing voter outreach and making information more constituent-friendly, we can ensure that every resident is informed, engaged, and empowered in the electoral process.

ETHICS IN GOVERNMENT

13. The recent pattern of indictments and resignations surrounding City Hall has exposed serious ethical problems in City Government. Please describe how you will maintain the highest ethical standards in office.

If elected, I am committed to upholding the highest ethical standards by prioritizing transparency, integrity, and accountability in all aspects of governance. I will ensure that constituents are consistently informed about actions and decisions through clear reporting and accessible communication channels. Additionally, I will advocate for stricter conflict-of-interest policies, ensure proper vetting of appointed personnel, and maintain an open-door policy to encourage feedback from constituents. By doing so, I will foster a government that is transparent, responsible, and accountable to our City.

14. Incoming public servants must sever ties and divest from companies or other interests that have business dealings with the City, but they are not required to recuse themselves when working on matters involving their former business partners, clients, employer, etc. Do you support forbidding public servants to work on matters relating to their former business partners, clients, employers, and other interests for a set period of time?

Yes

15. Some campaign consultants also work as lobbyists. Do you support restricting campaign consultants from lobbying the candidates they served for two years after the candidate won elected office?

Yes

16. Do you support moving lobbying oversight and enforcement from the City Clerk's Office to another agency charged with ethics issues, like the Conflicts of Interest Board?

Yes

*** In the box below, you may provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to improve ethics standards in New York City government.**

I plan to push for enhanced ethics training for all public servants, and advocate for the establishment of an independent ethics commission with the authority to investigate and address potential conflicts of interest, misconduct, and corruption.

POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY

17. Who do you think should have the final say on discipline in the New York Police Department? (i.e., Place the final decision with the Police Commissioner; the Civilian Complaint Review Board; the Mayor; the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety; or another individual or entity).

I believe the final decision on discipline within the New York Police Department should rest with the Police Commissioner, following thorough advice and recommendations from a board composed of members from the Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) and Mayor appointees. This approach ensures a fair, informed process while incorporating both internal leadership and independent oversight to maintain accountability and public trust.

*** In the box below, you may provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to improve police accountability in New York.**

I am committed to working closely with the NYPD to ensure that proper reforms are implemented within the department. From revising recruitment strategies to expanding multicultural training, we must ensure that officers uphold their oath to serve and protect with integrity and respect. As a former Auxiliary Police Officer, I have witnessed firsthand the dedication and hard work of our officers, as well as the areas where change may be needed. By implementing thoughtful reforms, we can strengthen the relationship between law enforcement and the community, fostering greater trust and collaboration.

CHECKS AND BALANCES

18. The Mayor currently has the power to block charter revision ballot questions (proposed by the City Council, other charter commissions, and citizen petitions) by establishing their own Charter Revision Commission. Do you support removing this Mayoral power?

Yes

19. Do you support allowing bills with strong support to go through the committee process and be put to a vote on the floor without needing the permission of the speaker?

Yes

20. Please provide your views about the New York City Council's "advice and consent" powers. In what cases, if any, should a mayor need the Council's approval for an appointment of a high ranking Mayoral official, such as an agency commissioner?

The New York City Council's "advice and consent" powers are key to ensuring our government's transparency and accountability. We must preserve this system of checks and balances, ensuring that the Council continues to play a vital role in approving mayoral appointments that impact the governance and

functions of our city. This process is essential for maintaining oversight and ensuring that appointments align with the best interests of all New Yorkers.

*** In the box below, you may provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to improve the system of checks and balances in New York.**

To improve the system of checks and balances in New York, I have consistently advocated for greater transparency and accountability in government operations through my work as Director of Constituent Services and in previous government roles. As Councilmember, I will continue this commitment by advocating for regular reviews of city policies and actions to ensure that all branches of government are held accountable to the people they serve. Additionally, I plan to sit on the Oversight and Investigation Committee to further strengthen accountability and transparency in the city’s operations.

ADDITIONAL INFO