

Brad Lander, Citizen Union Mayoral Questionnaire

First Name

Brad

Middle Name

N/A

Last Name

Lander

In Which Primary

Democratic

Age

55

Education

Parkway School District (public schools), K-12, St. Louis, MO

AB, University of Chicago, 1991

M.Sc, Social Anthropology, University College, London, 1992

M.Sc, City and Regional Planning, Pratt Institute, 1999

Current Job, position, or occupation

New York City Comptroller

Other positions or offices

New York City Council Member (2010-2021)

Previous Jobs or Positions

Director, Pratt Center for Community Development (Oct 2003 - Feb 2009)

Director, Fifth Avenue Committee (Feb 1993 - October 2003)

Email

[REDACTED]

Campaign Manager Name

[REDACTED]

Campaign Manager Email

[REDACTED]

Phone Number**Website**

landerfornyc.com

X

@bradlander

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/BradLander>

Instagram

@brad.lander

Bluesky

@bradlander.bsky.social

Other Social Media Platforms

N/A

1. What are your top three campaign promises or goals, and what action will you take to achieve them if elected?**a) End Street Homelessness for People with Serious Mental Illness**

My #1 campaign commitment is to end street homelessness for people with serious mental illness, as outlined in my comprehensive, ready-on-day-one [“Safer for All”](#) plan. Coming out of the pandemic, the number of people with serious mental illness sleeping on our streets and subways has grown significantly, and sporadic incidents of random violence have heightened public attention and fear. But it does not have to be this way.

Achieving this goal will require mayoral leadership, and a better-coordinated continuum of care between city agencies, hospitals, and social service providers, so we stop sweeping people from subway to street to hospital to jail, and back again. I support increased flexibility for involuntary hospitalization when individuals are a danger to themselves or others. But ultimately, we must connect people to housing with services, or they will simply wind up right back on the streets. That’s why the heart of my plan is a [“Housing First”](#) approach, which moves people directly from the street into existing supportive housing/SRO units with wraparound services. This model has proven effective at getting and keeping people housed 70-90% of the time. This will make NYC a safer city, and a more compassionate one.

b) Declare a State of Emergency to Tackle the Housing Affordability Crisis

NYC faces an affordability crisis that is crushing families and straining the city's economy. I've been a leader in the fight for more affordable housing in NYC for decades, from my time at Fifth Avenue Committee & the Pratt Center, in the campaigns to strengthen tenant protections, and as the champion for the Gowanus Rezoning (the biggest affordable housing rezoning in recent years). As Comptroller, I've made historic investments in housing affordability, issuing \$2 billion in social bonds (the first in the City's history) that have financed over 7,000 units of low-income housing, and an innovative investment of pension fund dollars that saved the 35,000 units of rent-stabilized housing put at risk by the failure of Signature Bank.

To confront the crisis, I will declare a state of emergency to expedite the building of 500,000 homes over the next ten years, strengthen tenant protections, and fix our broken housing agencies. My [housing plan](#) begins with convening a "citizens assembly" to establish a shared framework for growth and affordability, that the City can then use to streamline the ULURP process and expedite projects. We will build 50,000 new homes to own or rent on 4 of the City's 12 municipal golf courses. To protect tenants, I will fully fund the "right to counsel" commitment that has been proven successful in reducing evictions. I will rebuild a meaningful pathway to homeownership for working class New Yorkers, including a new wave of permanently affordable cooperatives (a 21st-century version of Mitchell Lama) and a "[Homes for City Workers](#)" program that doubles the home-purchasing power of municipal employees. I will implement my [Building Blocks of Change](#) and [Yelp for NYCHA Repairs](#) plans to fix our broken housing agencies, HPD and NYCHA, so they can deliver on these goals.

c) Offer Free, High Quality Child Care and Universally-Accessible After-School Programs to Elementary and Middle-School Students

As part of my commitment to making our city more affordable, I will ensure the City fully delivers on the promise of universal 3-K and Pre-K—and begin building a full day 2-K for All program to serve 2-year-olds. And I will offer a free, high-quality after-school program for every elementary or middle-school student in a NYC public school. Together, these programs will guarantee every child in preschool gets the services they need, when they need them; providers are paid on time; child care workers earn fair wages; and working families have access to stable, reliable child care. My plan will increase families' disposable income by nearly \$2 billion annually, boost productivity, and deliver an additional \$900 million each year to employers through reduced turnover and a more stable workforce.

2. 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.

I have a decades-long track record as a champion for more honest, effective, and responsible government. As a City Councilmember, I authored the [Independent Expenditure Disclosure Act](#), giving NYC the most aggressive SuperPAC disclosure requirements in the country, and helped reform NYC's campaign finance system to make it more effective. I led the successful City Council [rules reform effort of 2014](#), banning outside income and ending the process of Speaker's giving some Members 10X the member items of others. And I was the lead sponsor on the original ranked choice voting legislation, and helped to lead the campaigns to win RCV through the 2018 and 2019 Charter Revision Commissions.

I co-sponsored the Community Safety Act, which established the Office of the NYPD Inspector General, and strengthened the City's prohibition on racial profiling. What followed were dramatic declines in stop-and-frisk, accompanied by dramatic declines in crime. The NYPD Inspector General's office has produced many significant reports that have meaningfully helped improve police accountability.

As Comptroller, I have provided unprecedented transparency, becoming the first Comptroller to:

- establish a [lobbying disclosure dashboard](#) to publicly release meetings that my senior staff or I have with lobbyists
- make public [the City's pension fund investments](#)
- Make public [the City's pension fund M/WBE asset managers](#)

Beyond transparency on our own office, I've also established numerous dashboards that provide transparency into other aspects of City government, including:

- [Measuring NYC Government Performance](#)
- [NYC Agency Staffing Dashboard](#) (recognized as a [national model](#))
- [NYC Employer Violations Dashboard](#)
- [Charting Homelessness in NYC](#)
- [Department of Correction Dashboard](#)
- [Checkbook NYC](#) (created by Comptroller John Liu, expanded during my tenure)

I have run all of my campaigns with public matching funds, and added voluntary restrictions (e.g. not taking donations from corporate PACs, fossil fuel executives or RE developers doing business in NYC) in order to avoid potential conflicts.

3. Do you support moving New York City's elections from odd-numbered years to even-numbered years, and will you publicly support efforts in Albany to implement this reform?

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.

Yes | No

Comments:

I support moving NYC’s municipal elections to even-numbered years to boost turnout. Our democracy thrives when we remove barriers to voting and make it as easy as possible to participate in elections. Historically low voter turnout leads to a stagnant political system that fails to engage the electorate. Elected officials and candidates have a responsibility to expand access to the ballot and demonstrate that elections can drive meaningful, lasting change.

4. The New York City Board of Elections (NYC BOE) has been a source of frustration for voters and candidates for years. How will you use your power as Mayor to improve the operations of the NYC BOE and ensure that its operations are transparent and accountable to the public?

I have long been in favor of reforming the New York City Board of Elections. As Mayor, I will advocate for the passage S699/A1852 (Krueger/Rozic) to reform the structure of the NYC Board of Elections (whose current 10-member structure, controlled by the County Party leaders, is deeply dysfunctional) to be more efficient and democratic, as well as providing for greater professionalization, modernization and skills-based hiring. I will also use my bully pulpit to push the Board to professionalize its operations and make them more transparent and accountable, and will negotiate with the Board to provide funding carefully and transparently targeted to achieve these goals.

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

Yes | No

Comments:

I was lead sponsor on the original ranked choice voting legislation in the Council, and helped to lead the campaigns to win RCV through the 2018 and 2019 Charter Revision Commissions. RCV results in cross-coalition campaigns focused on issues over negativity and factions, higher turnout, and outcomes that far better reflect the values and priorities of communities.

6. 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 affiliation, move on to the general election?

Yes | **No**

Comments: While there are problems with how our political parties operate – I think it's appropriate to have political parties, and let them choose their nominees through a primary process.

*** 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.**

Expanding access to voting is essential to strengthening our democracy, and there is still much work to be done in Albany. Key reforms such as implementing same-day registration, universal vote-by-mail, and lowering the voting age to 16 would help make the electoral process more inclusive. I support changing the deadline to switch party registration, ensuring voters are not unfairly disenfranchised by the extremely early deadline under the current closed primary system. Additionally, it is critical to guarantee that all in-person voting sites are fully accessible to disabled voters, removing barriers that prevent full participation in our elections.

7. 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 | No

Comments: I support Intro 953-2024 (sponsored by CM Restler) to prohibit candidates accepting contributions bundled by people who do business with the City.

8. 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 | No

Comments: I have run all of my campaigns with public matching funds. The program is critical to ensuring a new wave of electeds, who are beholden to their voters rather than outside interests.

*** 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.**

As a City Councilmember, I authored the [Independent Expenditure Disclosure Act](#) of 2014, giving NYC the most aggressive SuperPAC disclosure requirements in the country. (I wish we could ban them entirely, and I strongly oppose the Citizens United decision which prevents that.)

I was an active co-sponsor of legislation in 2019 that helped reform NYC's campaign finance system to make it even more effective.

9. The recent 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.

New Yorkers deserve a leader who upholds the highest standards of ethics and integrity, rebuilding trust in our city's government through transparent, accountable and honest leadership. I am proud to have a long track record of living up to high ethical standards in government. As Mayor, I will restore honesty and ethics to City Hall, both personally and institutionally, and build a nimble government that solves problems with integrity, efficiency, collaboration, and transparency. Toward this end, I've already outlined plans to [clean up corruption](#) at City Hall, [modernize the City's fiscal framework](#), [reform procurement](#), and attract, support, and retain a [world-class NYC workforce](#) (built in part on work I've done in the Comptroller's office that has been [praised as a national](#)

[model](#)), so we can deliver the services and outcomes that New York City's working families depend on.

10. Incoming public servants must sever ties and divest from companies or other interests that have business dealing 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 | No

Comments:

11. Some campaign consultants also work as lobbyists. Do you support restricting campaign consultants from lobbying their former clients for a period of two years after their client has won elected office?

Yes | No

Comments: I support Intro 77-2024 (sponsored by CM Restler) to close loopholes in lobbying restrictions to ensure that no high-ranking City Hall staffer can lobby City agency for two years following their departure from City service (currently they are only prohibited from lobbying the Mayor's Office, but allowed to lobby agencies, even those they supervised).

*** 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.**

Ensuring a better run City government will be a key priority of my administration – which more explicitly means cleaning up corruption and bringing integrity back to City Hall so New Yorkers can trust that our institutions can deliver in their best interests.

As Mayor I will –

- **Make City appointments** based on qualifications, not by political or personal connections
- **Commit to abiding by good labor practices** with all staff, and ensure an office that is free of sexual harassment, bullying, exploitation, or abuse
 - Propose to transfer responsibility for investigating and acting on sexual harassment complaints about City Hall and Administration officials to the

Conflicts of Interest Board (COIB) rather than City Hall, which has proven unable to police itself.

- **Release Public Schedules** — I will proactively release my public schedule and those of my deputy mayors in an online database.
- **Disclose Meetings with Lobbyists** — I will reinstate the requirement that the administration publicly disclose all meetings that I, deputy mayors, and agency heads take with lobbyists.
- **Media Transparency and Accessibility** — I will:
 - Commit to transparent communication with the media, answering on- and off-topic questions at press conferences and holding media availabilities, including regular sit-downs with community and ethnic media.
 - Protect reporters' right to access the mayor and my team, [even when I disagree with them](#).
 - Move the “shack” (the workspace for news outlets who cover the NYPD) [back into 1 Police Plaza](#), re-establishing reporters' direct access to the Police Department while maintaining increased access for community and ethnic media outlets.
- **Release Tax Returns** — I will release my tax returns annually without delay.
- **Respond to FOIL Requests** — I will ensure that my administration provides timely responses to FOIL requests (following the model my team has set in the Comptroller's Office).
- **Data Transparency** — I will continue to champion data transparency, leveraging public dashboards like those I developed as Comptroller on city [management](#) & [staffing](#), [DOC](#), [climate](#), [homelessness](#), and [asylum seekers](#).

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

In general, disciplinary decisions should be made by the head of an agency; so for routine decisions that travel through the NYPD's normal processes (i.e. recommendations from a commanding officer, or from the Internal Affairs Bureau), final decisions should be made by the NYPD Commissioner.

However, for complaints substantiated by the Civilian Complaint Review Board, the current system – where the Police Commissioner retains final disciplinary - authority with the NYPD Commissioner (as required by State law) –has eroded public trust. Even in routine CCRB cases that don't require a trial, the CCRB can recommend discipline, but those recommendations are often dismissed or downgraded by NYPD leadership. I

believe that in such cases, the CCRB Board's disciplinary recommendations should be binding.

For the most serious CCRB cases— those currently prosecuted by the CCRB's Administrative Prosecution Unit (APU) in trials before the NYPD, I support shifting both the trial and final disciplinary decision to a special part of the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings (OATH). This would ensure that serious misconduct cases are heard and decided by a neutral, independent body after due process.

I commit to restore funding and full-time headcount at the CCRB to ensure the agency is adequately staffed to its job effectively, including completing its investigations in a more timely manner.

13. How do you view the role of the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety?

I will appoint a Deputy Mayor for Public Safety who will oversee a comprehensive portfolio that recognizes the critical link between public safety, public health, and emergency response in order to ensure focused, coordinated leadership across safety and health agencies. This role will be responsible for aligning the efforts of the NYPD, Correction, Probation, FDNY, the Offices of Criminal Justice and Neighborhood Safety, Emergency Management, working in close coordination with the City's health and social service agencies — ensuring a unified, strategic approach to reducing crime, improving emergency response, and addressing the root causes of public safety challenges. This will include responsibility for the oversight and coordination recommendations of my office's recent report and recommendations for [strengthening the City's Crisis Management System](#).

14. Do you support making the appointment of the New York City Police Commissioner subject to the advice and consent of the City Council?

Yes | No

Comments: I support giving the City Council "advice and consent" for key roles such as the NYC Public Schools Chancellor, the Budget Director, the Police Commissioner, and the City Planning Commission chair. This will help ensure the appointment of first-rate professionals, free of corruption or cronyism, and provide the public with a transparent hearing on key positions.

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 City.

In 2015, I worked alongside Public Advocate (then Councilmember) Jumaane Williams and a coalition of advocates and organizers to spearhead the passage of the Community Safety Act to strengthen the City's prohibition on racial profiling and create the office of the NYPD Inspector General. What followed were dramatic declines in stop-and-frisk, accompanied by dramatic declines in crime. The NYPD Inspector General's office has produced many significant reports that have meaningfully helped improve police accountability.

I will continue to insist on genuine accountability, at every level from the mayor down, so that New York City can be a city with safety and justice for all. More specifically, as Mayor I will:

- **Appoint a NYPD Commissioner and Deputy Mayor** who are committed to accountability within the NYPD and restoring trust in the agency, including a significantly higher rate of discipline consistent with CCRB recommendations.
- Work closely with the federal court-appointed **Stop and Frisk monitor** to close out the monitorship through full compliance with monitor demands, and a strong system for accountability moving forward.
- **Reinstate [NYPD Deputy Commissioner of Risk Management](#)** to identify and implement improvements needed for an [effective and humane 21st Century NYPD](#).
- **[Increase NYPD Special Victims Division staffing](#)** to meet nationally accepted standards, ensuring detectives have the resources to support victims with the attention and dignity they deserve.
- Implement the Brennan Center's recommendations to **strengthen the [NYPD Inspector General](#)** by ensuring it is fully funded and staffed, has access to the NYPD records it needs to conduct thorough investigations, and has the independence to do its job effectively.
- **Restore [funding and full-time headcount](#) at the CCRB** to ensure the agency is adequately staffed to do its job effectively.
- **Require NYPD to follow CCRB disciplinary recommendations** in cases under CCRB's jurisdiction, preventing NYPD commissioners from overturning decisions, including those upheld by administrative judges or agreed to in guilty pleas.
- **Focused NYPD intervention in highest CCRB complaint precincts.**
- **[Provide CCRB with independent and direct remote access credentials to all NYPD Body Worn Camera storage databases](#)** so that the videos can be searched, viewed, and used as appropriate in CCRB investigations. Such access should be subject to appropriate credential procedures and audit trails to address security and privacy concerns.
- Add to the Mayor's Management Report (MMR) **key data on the Commission to Combat Police Corruption** including staffing and budget data to ensure the Commission is adequately resourced.
- **Commit to the highest levels of transparency around law enforcement to protect civil liberties and restore public trust in our City's law enforcement**

- **Full compliance** with the [POST Act](#), the [Right to Know Act](#), and the [How Many Stops Act](#);
- **Reporter access** to [radio](#) transmissions;
- **Timely disclosures** of [crime clearance rates](#); and
- **Media presence** inside Police Headquarters, moving [‘the Shack’ back to 1 Police Plaza](#).

15. 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 | No

Comments:

16. 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?

I support giving the City Council “advice and consent” for a defined set of key positions, including Schools Chancellor, Police Commissioner, and Budget Director (with a defined timeline, and a provision for interim appointments so there is never a gap of leadership). I do not view this as “giving up power,” since as Mayor I will still make the appointment, supervise, and hold sole right to retain or dismiss. Instead, it reflects a belief that New Yorkers deserve to hear a conversation about how key leaders will lead (important to restore trust in government after the Adams Administration), and my confidence that my excellent appointees will have no trouble persuading the City Council and the public of their strong ability to do the jobs.

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

I support legislation to make the NYC Conflicts of Interest Board (COIB) independent by removing the mayoral majority on its board and giving it a fixed budget, akin to the current structure of the Independent Budget Office. The Mayor, Public Advocate, Comptroller, and Speaker would each make one appointment, and the Mayor would nominate a Chair who would have to be approved by the other members.

Along with independence and adequate resources for training and investigation, COIB should be given responsibility for investigating and acting on sexual harassment complaints about City Hall and Administration officials.

Additionally, I would require that Law Department representation or retention of outside counsel to represent Administration officials must be approved by the Comptroller. The Comptroller should also have the power to ensure that the “Reasonable Expense” clause in the State Public Officers Law is enforced, safeguarding public funds from abuse, as has happened recently at City and State levels.

Please provide any other info you would like us to know about you and your candidacy.

I am running for mayor because New York’s working families are fed up with the skyrocketing cost-of-living, with neighborhoods that don’t feel safe, with a government that fails to deliver on their needs, and with a City Hall that is rife with corruption and refuses to stand up to Donald Trump.

New Yorkers deserve a safer, more affordable, and better-run city – one that improves their quality-of-life, provides high-quality public services, opens up opportunities for their families, and brings people together, regardless of what neighborhood they live in, where they’re from, or how much money they have.

At this critical moment, we need a mayor who will *stand up* and fight for New Yorkers in the face of the threats posed by Donald Trump to our families, to our budget, to our health care, to our civil liberties, and to immigrant, Muslim, and LGBTQ New Yorkers. And we also need a mayor with the proven experience to govern more effectively, so we can *live up* to our values, by actually delivering the affordable housing, safe streets and neighborhoods, high-quality public education, child care, and public services that our people depend on.

I’ve demonstrated the strong, honest, effective leadership NYC needs right now, and the commitment to fight and win for our city’s working families. I know what it takes to manage public agencies well, build first-rate teams, create dashboards that keep leaders focused on outcomes, bring down the cost of housing and child care, make our city safer for all communities, and bring people together across lines of difference – because I’ve done it.

I possess the qualities that I believe we need most in a mayor right now: bold vision, strong management experience, demonstrated public integrity – and a track record of winning citywide elections with a broad coalition, and then getting things done.