



2025 Primary Candidate Questionnaire - New York City Council

Citizens Union - Local Candidates Committee

GENERAL INFORMATION

Candidate info

Name	Bryan Hodge Vasquez
City Council District #	14
In which primary	Democratic
Age	24
Education	Bachelor of Arts, NYU. Juris Doctor (JD), Pace University School of Law
Current job, position, or occupation	Candidate, NYC Council District 14
Previous jobs or positions	Legislative Intern, Office of U.S Congressman Adriano Espaillat. Legal Fellow, NYC Councilman Shaun Abreu. Law Clerk, Bronx Supreme Court

Campaign contact information

Website	https://www.hodgevasquez.com/
X	https://x.com/i/flow/login
Instagram	https://www.instagram.com/hodgevasqueznyc/
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/HodgeVasquezNYC

INTRODUCTION

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

Promise 1: As rents and taxes skyrocket, Bryan is dedicated to implementing real solutions that make homes and apartments safer, truly affordable, and accessible, ensuring that no one in our community is left without a roof over their head.

Promise 2: As violent crime rises, Bryan offers more than just promises – he brings real solutions. He's committed to restoring a sense of safety and peace, ensuring every family in our community can live without fear, confident in a secure future.

Promise 3: As everyday costs rise, Bryan is focused on real solutions that puts more money back in the pockets of hardworking families. From expanding tax credits to lowering grocery prices, Bryan is committed to making life more affordable for the West Bronx

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.

The first bill I would introduce would require New York City to create its own localized Area Median Income (AMI) calculations, broken down by zip code. Right now, AMI is calculated county-wide, which in the Bronx includes more affluent neighborhoods like Riverdale and Country Club. This skews the numbers upward and results in so-called "affordable" housing that is anything but affordable for working-class communities like mine. In District 14, where the average annual income is around \$35,000, it's unacceptable to call a \$3,000/month studio affordable. If we're serious about addressing the housing crisis, we need to ground affordability in the lived reality of the people who call our neighborhoods home.

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

Lower Rent, Less Gun Violence & Mopeds on the Sidewalks, Lower Grocery Prices and Less Price Gouging

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?

The Northwest Bronx is home—from spending time with my grandparents who live just a few blocks away, to frequent visits with my godparents and local business owners who watched me grow up. It's where I've founded a neighborhood Democratic club to boost civic engagement and, during the COVID-19 pandemic, organized efforts to distribute masks and essential supplies to residents throughout the district. That initiative not only addressed critical needs but also underscored the strength and resilience of our community when we unite during challenging times.

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.

Having earned my law degree and holding a BA in Political Science from NYU, I've consistently focused on making government more transparent, accountable, and responsive to our communities. At the Bronx Supreme Court, I worked extensively on election law issues, advocating for increased ballot access and meaningful electoral reforms. My commitment extends to ensuring stronger oversight of elected officials and improving accountability mechanisms to address misconduct, particularly within the police department. These experiences have shaped my dedication to advancing good government and meaningful reform at every level.

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

The City Council will have a pivotal role in shaping the direction of New York City in the coming term, particularly as we brace for the return of a hostile federal administration. For District 14 in the Bronx—where working-class immigrant families are the heart and soul of the community—the Council must be more than a legislative body. It must be a shield. As a city built on the labor, sacrifice, and dreams of immigrants, we have a moral obligation to protect our most vulnerable neighbors from the threats posed by federal rollbacks. That means expanding the right to counsel not just in housing court, but in immigration proceedings as well—because no one should face deportation or detention without a fair chance to defend themselves. The Council must invest in legal protections, community infrastructure, and policy oversight that reflect our values and ensure New York remains a city rooted in justice and the rule of law.

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

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

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.

I’ve worked in City Hall, in Congress, and in our courts—I’ve seen firsthand how power can be abused when left unchecked. The only way to stop corruption is to limit the powers of those who perpetuate it. That’s why I support significantly expanding the role of independent watchdogs in city government. We need stronger, truly autonomous oversight bodies with the authority and resources to investigate and hold public officials accountable—without interference. I will champion reforms that take discretionary power out of the shadows, increase public reporting requirements, and close loopholes that enable self-dealing. Ethics in government isn’t optional—it’s the foundation of public service. With my law degree and firsthand experience walking these very halls, I’m committed to building a City government that answers to the people, not to insiders.

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

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).

The Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) should have the final say on police discipline. Civilian oversight is essential for public trust, especially in communities that have historically borne the brunt of police misconduct. While the Police Commissioner currently has the power to override CCRB recommendations, that structure undermines true accountability. If the Commissioner rejects a disciplinary recommendation, the CCRB must have the authority to override that decision and enforce discipline. We cannot allow internal politics to outweigh justice. Real accountability means independent oversight with teeth—not just another advisory body.

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 City Council should have advice and consent power over all agency commissioner appointments. These officials oversee critical services that directly impact the lives of New Yorkers—from housing to policing to sanitation—and their selection should not rest solely in the hands of the Mayor. Requiring Council approval ensures a broader vetting process, encourages transparency, and helps prevent political appointments that prioritize loyalty over qualifications or community trust. If we want a city government that works for everyone, we need shared accountability in how its leadership is chosen.

ADDITIONAL INFO