

CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR YONKERS CANDIDATES FOR ELECTED OFFICE

BELOW FIND BRIAN CARTER'S REPLY TO THE FOLLOWING:

CAMPAIGN PLATFORM PRIORITIES

School System: Making sure the school system is adequately funded and the funds are disbursed appropriately.

Crime: Equipping the police to interact with the community to foster a better relationship with the community. The community needs to feel that they play a role in keeping the neighbor safe.

Economic Development: Work to review projects in a timely manner and eliminate the delay in getting development projects approved and started. I look forward to new development which in turn should create more jobs.

REDEVELOPMENT

Urban Planning –By the Yonkers Planning Department: I think a comprehensive Master Plan is long overdue. Rezoning of the central downtown areas is a very necessary step to eliminating the delay with approvals. The plan helps the public and developers know what is allowed in the area.

Community Involvement: When specific plans are before the city for consideration, the community should be properly notified of the public hearings. The community's comments and concerns should be addressed by the correct city department or the developer's representatives. In addition, visual displays of the proposed development placed in public facilities and on the city's website for easy access would be helpful. Finally, the involvement of the younger generation should be encouraged so that high school or college students who are aspiring to obtain degrees in planning, architecture and engineering can gain invaluable hands on experience and be involved with the process.

CLIMATE PROTECTION AGREEMENT: If elected, I would help to ensure that the City of Yonkers meets the goals of the Mayors Climate Protection Agreement.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND ADAPTIVE REUSE OF BUILDINGS:

I believe strongly in restoration and rehabilitation of the existing buildings. Take for example, Greyston Foundation rehabilitation of several building on Warburton Avenue and the old Trolley Barn on Main Street which was turned into lofts and commercial space. I also believe that the government should encourage historic preservation and work with civic and historical organizations to that end.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Although I have been aware of the various commercial and residential developments in Yonkers, I have not participated in the SEQRA process and I have not read and commented on an Environmental Impact Study (EIS). However, if elected I will take an active role in the environmental review process and carefully consider each impact on the community.

LOW INCOME AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Low income and affordable housing for Yonkers residents is important. Yonkers has the most, if not the highest amount of, low and affordable housing developments in Westchester County. Over the past few years, I have seen existing housing stock being renovated at Whitney Young and 47 Riverdale Avenue. Residential units were also rehabilitated for senior citizens at Monastery Manor, Father Finian Sullivan and current renovations are going on at Woodstock Manor and Kubasek Housing to name a few. The Municipal Housing Authority has been making improvements to the housing units and security measures have been put in place for tenant safety throughout the city.

The recent openings of new affordable housing developments at 326 Riverdale Avenue, Croton Heights and Highland Senior Housing as well as the homeownership opportunities at Father Pat Carroll Green show a commitment by the City to address this issue. New affordable residential units are also underway at the former Mulford Gardens site, 49 North Broadway and Ashburton Senior Housing show the City has housing on its radar screen.

So I think Yonkers is on track to provide sufficient housing for its residents. However, I realize the population is growing and Yonkers must continue to look at ways to keep low income and affordable housing options available to its residents. I will work to ensure housing is safe, affordable and accessible to everyone. I agree new development should include a certain percentage of low income housing in each project. Projects should be looked at individually but 80% market rate and 20% affordable is a reasonable benchmark for new development and helps to keep the communities diverse.

JOB DEVELOPMENT AND RETENTION

To keep Yonkers' existing small businesses flourishing in the current economy, I would propose the City's Economic Development Office provide quarterly workshops to inform the small businesses of available programs from the federal, state and local governments and provide information on low-interest loans. In addition, I would encourage small businesses to use the various resources of the Workforce Development Office for job training and employee referrals.

I agree developers should be required to give Yonkers' residents priority for jobs, especially when they receive tax incentives to build their projects.

TAX SUBSIDIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

I definitely agree we should track accountability for the agreements made regarding jobs, tax payments due and community agreements made by developers in their contracts with the city. I propose we do this by obtaining and reviewing the Yonkers IDA's annual report to see the project results. Reports could also be submitted from the other LDCs. Where the city is a party to any agreements, annual reports should be submitted to ensure developers are keeping their end of the deal.

I think the IDA and LDCs are moving in the right direction toward transparency. Meetings notices are posted in advance and all meetings are open to the public.

The IDA and LDCs boards can be more representative of the community. This could be addressed by working with the Mayor so that as the current board members' terms expire new selections could include a community and labor representative.

The IDAs and LDCs are effective development tools to help businesses in Yonkers. Incentives are sometimes needed to encourage developers or businesses to invest in the city. The Yonkers IDA has assisted with the Riverfront Library and 66 Main Street Lofts, Cross County, Ridge Hill and many housing developments. So I think the IDA and LDCs will be needed for future projects as we move the City forward.

IDAs are necessary because they ensure we are able to compete with other cities and states.

Basically, the Council should work more closely with the IDAs and LDCs so deals are made in a way that the taxpayers reap benefits of the new developments. Development should be a win-win for the city, the taxpayer and the developer. Developers are receiving tax subsidies so the taxpayers should receive the number of decent paying jobs for Yonkers residents and the city officials should use the additional income tax and sales taxes collected to make the taxpayer's quality of life better.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER AND QUALITY OF LIFE:

OPEN SPACE: At the present time there is not enough open space in Yonkers. The population of Yonkers is increasing and continues to increase. I would fund additional open space through partnerships with developers and the county and funding for maintenance from the city. The government should be more proactive in preservation and providing more open space to the public.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: The public needs to be well informed. The more informed the more involvement. We can use the media outlets, have more town hall meetings, tenant association meetings and interaction with religious/cultural organizations.

PARKING: The current Yonkers parking zoning regulations are outdated and should be revised. Yonkers population is growing and continues to grow. Once the redevelopment is complete there will also be an influx of more people visiting, working and moving into Yonkers. We need to have sufficient parking.

Brian Carter- Republican/Conservative Candidate for 1st District Council

BRIAN A. CARTER
FOR
1st DISTRICT CITY COUNCIL YONKERS
REPUBLICAN/CONSERVATIVE

RESIDENCY:

Lifelong Yonkers Resident

WORK EXPERIENCE:

City of Yonkers, Department of Public Works - 32 Years

EDUCATION:

Graduated from Yonkers High School

COMMUNITY SERVICES:

Nepperhan Community Center - Former Board Member

Soul Savings Station 2 - Deacon

Yonkers Department of Public Work - Chaplin

Gold Star Mothers – Care Packages to Troop

Mayor's Annual Coat Drive – Volunteer

Teamster's Thanksgiving Drive - Volunteer

True Love Ministries –Feeding the Seniors Outreach

Hudson Valley Construction Career Day - Presenter

Yonkers Public School Recycling Program – Instructor

COMMUNITY RECOGNITION:

Everyday Hero Award Recipient –Kiwanis Club, East Yonkers

Recognized for civic involvement, The Yonkers Municipal Housing Authority