



Monday, May 17, 2021

## Citizens Union 2021 Candidate Questionnaire - Borough President

Dear Candidate,

Congratulations on your decision to run for the office of borough president! Citizens Union appreciates your commitment to serve the public.

In the following pages, you will find questions regarding your positions on various reform issues and your plans for office. The form includes sections on functions of the borough president office, planning and capital budget, and community boards and appointments.

Responses to these questions will be one of several factors Citizens Union uses to evaluate candidates running for city offices, and to issue our preference for the June primary. Read more about the method, principles, and criteria of the candidate evaluation process [here](#).

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**If you wish to be considered, please submit the questionnaire by April 17 and no later than 48 before your interview.**

If you seek our support, we will also need to schedule an interview with you as part of the evaluation process.

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If you cannot complete the questionnaire in one sitting, you can click Save and Continue Later at the bottom of every page.

Once you submit the questionnaire, you will receive a confirmation email with a PDF file containing your responses. Citizens Union will not be able to see your answers unless you submit the form. We plan to make responses to this questionnaire public on our website, printed voters directory, and other appropriate venues (your contact information will not be published).

For any questions, please email [candidates@citizensunion.org](mailto:candidates@citizensunion.org)

We thank you very much for your response.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Your Info

#### Name

Antonio Reynoso

**Seeking office:**

Brooklyn Borough President

**In which primary**

Democratic

**Age**

38

**Education**

Lemoyne College

**Occupation/Employer**

New York City Council

**Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement**

Two term city council member, ACORN organizing, Obama orgaizer

**Website**

reynosoforbrooklyn.com

**Twitter**

Reynosobrooklyn

**Facebook**

Reynosobrooklyn

**Affirmations**

**Have you completed the required campaign finance filings?**

Yes

**Have you qualified to receive matching campaign finance funds from the CFB?**

Yes

**Are you willing to be interviewed by Citizens Union's Local Candidates Committee?**

Yes

(Please note: interviews are prerequisites for Citizens Union's endorsements)

## Signature



## THE OFFICE OF THE BOROUGH PRESIDENT

**1. The role of borough presidents often changes depending on the office holder. How would you use the office of the borough president to impact city policies affecting the borough? What is the vision of your office?**

As borough president, I'm going to fight for a Brooklyn for all of us! I'll use the bully pulpit to continue fighting for real police accountability, truly affordable, and ending environmental racism!

**2. The city charter was recently amended to establish an independent, minimum budget for borough presidents. If elected, how will you utilize this new protected status to better serve your borough?**

I believe in equity-- meaning those impacted or hit most by systemic inequalities should get more resources. I'll use my budget to fund and support communities most impacted by the problems and I'll do so in an equitable way.

**3. The charter requires borough presidents to directly engage with city agencies through a borough service cabinet to coordinate service delivery and issues. Yet the nature, level, and quality of collaboration with agencies varies. How will you work with city agencies to ensure meaningful engagement?**

Yes. I'm going to make borough hall a one stop shop for city services for borough residents. I'll work hard with city agencies to make sure that residents don't have to go further than Borough Hall to get the help they need.

**4. Do you support empowering borough presidents to require the appearance of borough commissioner of city agencies for the monthly interagency “cabinet” meetings led by the borough presidents?**

Yes

**5. Borough presidents can hold hearings on any matter of public interest and are charged with establishing a borough-wide complaint program to report public complaints to better service delivery by agencies. How would you use these powers and the position of the office to amplify the concerns of borough residents? What issues might you focus on to improve agency performance or draw public attention?**

A couple of things: First, I plan to ensure that the BP's office becomes a clearinghouse for borough-wide services, meaning that if anyone needs help they know they can find it at borough hall. Second, I would use the bully pulpit of the BPs office to call attention to any systemic failures residents face. I've always held a robust oversight role on the Council and will continue to do so as BP.

**6. The borough presidents have the authority to introduce legislation yet few borough presidents in recent years have exercised this authority. Would you utilize this power, and, if so, what legislation would you introduce?**

Yes! Specifically, I would introduce 2 bills. The first on city-wide compositing and the second to fight for commercial rent relief!

## **PLANNING AND CAPITAL BUDGET**

**7. Developers argue ULURP should be streamlined while community groups and advocates believe more opportunities for input should be provided or that voting thresholds should be changed for application approval. The pandemic has cast further disruption to the process. What reforms to ULURP do you support?**

There are definitely specific reforms we can talk about, but the real conversation I want us to have is around comprehensive planning. It's abundantly

clear that our city's land-use process is not working and as a result, our city's land-use decisions have been irrational and inequitable. We need to guide land use in NYC in a way that is comprehensive, holistic, and with equity at the forefront. The only way we can do that is with a city-wide comprehensive plan!

**8. The borough presidents make recommendations to the mayor on capital projects as part of the budget process. All of the boroughs combined additionally receive 5 percent of the appropriations in the mayor's capital budget divided between the boroughs based on formulas related to land size and population. What would be your priorities for capital projects in the borough?**

My priority is to make sure that capital dollars are spent equitably, meaning the communities hit the hardest by systemic issues, get the most help! Specifically, I'd use the capital budget to outfit every BK public hospital with a state-of-the-art birthing center. Right now, black women are dying almost 8-12x more during childbirth in NYC than white women. This is a problem and we need to address it. Second, I would use my budget to increase park space and better fund school programs.

**9. If elected, would you post on your website all applications received by your office for capital and expense discretionary funds, as well as groups which ultimately received funding?**

Yes

## **COMMUNITY BOARDS AND APPOINTMENTS**

**10. Borough presidents are charged with establishing a planning office that, among other functions, provides training and technical assistance to community boards on land use issues. The recently formed Civic Engagement Commission is also tasked with providing professional assistance to community boards, in consultation and coordination with borough presidents. Using the planning resources available, how would you use the office to help community boards fulfill their charter mandated responsibilities to provide feedback on land use**

**proposals, while enabling the boards to make decisions independent of the borough president's office?**

We need to get community boards bigger budgets and more support. As BP, I'll fight to increase community funding and work to appoint a comprehensive planner to every community board.

**11. Borough presidents are charged with making hundreds of appointments. What criteria would you use for appointments to positions appointed by the borough president (the Panel on Educational Policy, City Planning Commission, community boards, etc.)? What processes would you put in place for advertising open positions and recruiting qualified candidates that represent the diversity of New York City, and how would you assure that appointments represent the diversity of the borough's neighborhoods?**

As a council member, I introduced legislation to standardize and better screen community board applications in order to increase the quality of applicants. As BP, I plan to run robust recruitment drives to increase the volume, but also the quality, of applicants! It's clear: we need to deeply reform who sits and serves on community boards. We need economic diversity, transportation diversity, racial and ethnic diversity, and more on these boards. And I plan to fight for just that!

**12. Do you support granting the borough presidents the ability to make an additional appointment to the Board of Standards and Appeals, who would only vote on matters affecting that borough?**

Yes

**13. Do you support establishing independent budgeting for community boards?**

Yes

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

**14. What experience have you had, if any, with good government and reform issues? (e.g. voting and elections, campaign finance, ethics, police accountability, government transparency)**

**and oversight). If you've worked to advance these goals, we'd love to hear about it.**

Yes – Specifically, authored and fought for the Right to Know Act which requires the NYPD to notify civilians of their right to refuse a consent search!

**15. What are the top three campaign promises or goals, and what action will you take to achieve them if elected? Feel free to reference an answer above rather than restate it.**

First: Truly affordable housing

Second: Real police accountability

Third:

**16. If you have not addressed this already, in what major ways would your priorities as borough president differ from the incumbent?**

I'm a broken record on this one, but I firmly believe in asking those who have more to give more. As BP, I'm going to differentiate myself by not only using the bully pulpit to demand the wealthy pay their fair share, but I'm also going to use the BP's office to fund disadvantaged communities more.

**What else would you like us to know about yourself?**

**Please feel free to attach any additional information such as resume, campaign brochures, or issues statements.**

Please review your answers by clicking PREVIEW ANSWERS below. You can submit the questionnaire at the bottom of the preview page by clicking SUBMIT.

Once you click SUBMIT, you will receive a confirmation email with a PDF file containing your responses. If you don't see the email, please check your spam box.

If you have any further questions, you may contact us at [candidates@citizensunion.org](mailto:candidates@citizensunion.org).