



Monday, May 17, 2021

## Citizens Union 2021 Candidate Questionnaire - New York City Mayor

Dear Candidate,

In the following pages, you will find questions regarding your positions on various reform issues and your plans for office. The form includes four sections: the pandemic and city government, elections and voting, police accountability, and miscellaneous.

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public on our website, printed voters directory, and other appropriate venues (your contact information will not be published).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

Maya D. Wiley

#### Running in what primary

Democratic

**Age**

57

**Education**

Dartmouth, Columbia Law

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

Chair of CCRB, Chair of SDAG, Counsel to the Mayor, Flatbush Thrives, Center for Social Inclusion

**Website**

mayawileyformayor.com

**Twitter**

mayawiley

**Facebook**

/mayaformayor

**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 PANDEMIC AND CITY  
GOVERNMENT**

**1. If elected, you will start your term as New York City (hopefully) begins to reopen its businesses, offices, and institutions. How will you utilize the mayor's office to help rebuild the economic base of NYC?**

The centerpiece of my economic recovery proposal is a Works Progress Administration-style infrastructure, stimulus and jobs program: a \$10 billion investment to provide a shot in the arm of our City's economy—putting residents back to work and investing in the future of our communities. New Deal New York will create up to 100,000 new jobs for New Yorkers. 30,000 will be new jobs through projects that will employ artists, construction, technology, and engineer workers, along with approximately 70,000 indirect jobs for childcare workers, librarians, home healthcare workers, and manufacturers. Rebuilding the economic base means prioritizing working class New Yorkers that are the backbone of our City. I will streamline workforce development spending to ensure that NDNY new jobs go to the New Yorkers who need them most. I will also prioritize procurement for all projects from local MWBE businesses to support meeting aggressive goals, including industrial and manufacturing businesses.

I have proposed a comprehensive plan to support our small businesses, recognizing that they are the backbone of our communities, and critical to our economic well being. I will create a Regulatory Holiday for the first year of my administration's term, to provide \$100 Million in City-level regulatory relief to individual small businesses. I will also appoint a Chief Small Business Officer (CSBO) in the Mayor's Office to reinvent how the City interacts with small businesses by drastically reducing existing burdens. This CSBO will serve as a liaison between small businesses and the Mayor's Office, and demonstrates our commitment to including all voices at the table.

In addition, my Universal Community Care Plan recognizes that care exists in many forms: from paid childcare and elder care to direct services provided by frontline nonprofit workers to care provided within the home by family, to neighbors helping neighbors. This model will redirect \$300 million in diverted resources from incoming NYPD and DOCCS cadet classes to give 100,000 low-income informal caregivers and families a \$5,000

annual stipend to compensate them for their labor. This model provides financial relief and support to the care-givers that are the economic backbone of NYC.

**2. New York City is facing an economic and fiscal crisis. How would you ensure the fiscal health and integrity of city spending, while providing New Yorkers with valuable city services?**

New Deal New York will create a new centrally managed \$10 billion capital spending program. This 5-year program for public works projects will fund much-needed development, infrastructure repairs, and enhancements. The fund will consist of committed unspent capital funds and new capital dollars financed by City debt. The proposed spending would include new projects, as well as accelerating projects currently in the pipeline that meet the program's criteria which will include equity and advance social and economic goals. A direct way I will ensure the fiscal health and integrity of city spending is by appointing a New Deal Czar. This Czar will report directly to the Mayor, to oversee the plan, coordinate agency spending, and ensure efficiency, transparency and accountability. Spending on this scale requires focused, central coordination. A senior level official, will be responsible for streamlining the capital spending of all agencies, and federal capital for projects such as NYCHA and bridges and tunnels. The official will be responsible for working with the agencies on fast-tracking capital projects and eliminating the regulatory barriers faced by agencies in capital spending.

I will ensure the integrity of city spending by bringing the NYPD budget in line with our values and priorities. My administration will invest in our communities by cutting at least \$1 billion from the NYPD budget to fund investments in alternatives to policing. We will conduct a full audit of the NYPD's budget to assess how funding is currently distributed and make additional necessary cuts.

Finally, it is clear that there is waste and inefficiency in City government. Especially during an economic crisis, we must manage and spend wisely. My administration will move aggressively to identify bureaucratic bloat, waste, mismanagement and other opportunities for savings. We must

continually strive to improve our operations by spending fewer City taxpayer dollars to deliver better services. This is possible through improvements in technology, changes in trends, and a regular rethinking of how we do business. Managers across the City's agencies are in the best position to carry out this task, but have not been historically incentivized to do so. The Program to Eliminate the Gap (PEG) process has remained essentially unchanged since the 1980s, with agencies receiving one-dimensional targets that do not differentiate between the correction of unrealistic projections and true innovation. We will give each agency -- including the NYPD -- an efficiency target and hold my Commissioners accountable to meeting it. These efforts, combined with modernization, space purchasing and digitization programs will provide additional savings.

**3. In March 2020, Mayor de Blasio issued a state of emergency in New York City (as did Governor Cuomo in NY State) to remove any legal and regulatory barriers to fight the coronavirus pandemic. Do you have any concerns regarding the use of emergency powers by the Mayor during this crisis? How do you think city government can maintain public accountability standards at this time?**

The pandemic has presented significant challenges and I understand the need for the use of emergency powers. At the same time, there are steps that the City government can (and should) take to maintain public accountability. Among other things, the executive branch should provide regular, public reports on emergency orders and other actions. I would also consider a potential role for the City Council and other City officials in oversight of, or involvement in, the City's exercise of its emergency powers.

**4. The ability of citizens and advocates to make their voices heard in City Hall has been severely curtailed since city government shifted to work remotely. The next Mayor will need to decide how to adapt to the new reality. How would you propose to improve community engagement and public participation while using remote technology (in public hearings, meetings, etc.), particularly to ensure equity in participation?**

To ensure that all New Yorkers have access to remote technology, New Deal New York invests \$2 billion in new and accelerated spending to Modernize Physical and Digital Infrastructure. We will work to develop the City's digital infrastructure spending and leverage that spending for MWBE and local businesses. We will also leverage the City's digital infrastructure spending to help tackle the pervasive digital divide, including more low cost options and access. This will require creativity and transforming how the government works on broadband— as well as investment in the skill sets to build and deploy networks and ensure digital inclusion.

This improvement in digital connectedness will allow more New Yorkers to engage with City Hall, which will be critical to my Administration as I am, and forever will be, accountable to the people. I believe in listening to and learning from impacted communities to lead in partnership effectively with them. That is why I have made People's Assemblies a center piece of my candidacy and intend to continue them into my administration. I will also structure my administration in a way that prioritizes ongoing partnership, dialogue and feedback, and hire leaders who have a proven track record of collaboration and partnership.

## **VOTING AND ELECTIONS REFORM**

### **5. Do you consider yourself a supporter of Ranked Choice Voting? How will you work to maintain this system and educate voters on how it works?**

Yes, I absolutely support Ranked Choice Voting. I served as the chair of the campaign to pass Ranked Choice Voting because after doing the research, it was clear that RCV in other jurisdictions has given non-traditional candidates, including Black, Brown and women of all races more opportunities to serve their communities in public office. It also ensures communities of color have more power at the polls because voter participation drops off if there is a runoff. Instant runoff is more efficient and ensures our votes count. Ranked Choice Voting has not changed how I am running my campaign. I am running to represent ALL New Yorkers, and I am not running against anyone, but for the job of Mayor.

This is true whether or not there is Ranked Choice Voting. I do feel strongly that it is my responsibility as a candidate to help educate voters on the new system and am incorporating that education into my conversations with voters. Educating voters about the new system is also a core component of the work that my organizing and field team will be doing as we get closer to Primary day.

**6. Now that New York City has implemented Ranked Choice Voting, do you support moving to an Open Primary system (eliminating party primaries and establishing a non-partisan election system)**

No

**Comments**

**7. How will you use your power as Mayor to improve the operations of the NYC Board of Elections and its accountability to the city?**

If we have learned nothing over the past four years, we have learned how crucial it is to protect our democracy. The Board of Elections is dysfunctional and if New York were a federal battleground state it would have been dismantled and restructured decades ago. The NYC Board of Elections is an embarrassment to our City and undermines our democratic processes. As Mayor, I would advocate for a complete overhaul of the BOE to turn it into a competent, accountable agency. Additionally, I would work with Albany to continue to expand voter rights and access. Lastly, I would work with City agencies to educate New Yorkers on how to register and vote to ensure their voices are heard.

**8. The next mayor will appoint seven members to the city's redistricting commission. In doing so, the next mayor will have share the responsibility for shaping a fair political map for the coming decade. If elected, what objectives will you have in appointing commission members?**

When I am Mayor, I will always lead with my principles. This includes the people around me, upon whom I need to rely to get things done and stay on mission. These individuals will represent New York City literally and figuratively: they will be independent and experts in their field. They will look like New York City and all of the diversity the city

boasts. And all of them will value good government.

**9. Mayor de Blasio created a DemocracyNYC office, headed by a Chief Democracy Officer, tasked with increasing voter registration, improving voter access, promoting youth participation, and advancing democratic reforms. The Campaign Finance Board, the Board of Elections, and the Civic Engagement Commission share similar responsibilities. How would your administration organize its efforts to promote civic engagement and participation? How would that fit in your overall vision for the city?**

Yes, multiple elections over a course of a cycle is disruptive, expensive and drives low turnout.  
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**10. Do you support allowing the winner of a special election for a city office (except the mayor) to serve the remainder of the unexpired term, instead of only filling the position until the next general election?**

Yes

### Comments

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**11. The de Blasio administration launched a citywide civic education program, Civics for All, which included a new curriculum, training for teachers, and increased student voter registration drives. Do you support maintaining Civics for All and student voter registration drives at the same capacity?**

Yes

### Comments

## POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY

Citizens Union has been studying police accountability and performance in New York City for more than a decade. In our reports and advocacy efforts we have urged city government to strengthen the accountability of the New York Police Department to the public and create a more cohesive system of police oversight. Previous reports include: [2016 issue brief](#), [2013 position brief on Stop and Frisk](#), [2012 report on the CCRB](#), [2008 policy statement on police misconduct](#). Citizens Union's



2021 agenda for police reform, [published as a report](#) in March, calls for establishing a Deputy Mayor for Public Safety, allowing the CCRB to appeal the Police Commissioner’s decisions, making the appointment of Police Commissioner subject to advice and consent of the City Council, consolidating agencies with oversight authority, ending qualified immunity, and more.

**12. Do you support appointing a Deputy Mayor for Public Safety, with the expertise and authority to monitor and supervise the Police Department on the Mayor’s behalf?**

**13. Do you support making the appointment of the Police Commissioner subject to the advice and consent of the City Council?**

**Comments**

As Mayor, I will appoint a civilian Police Commissioner who has demonstrated a sincere commitment to transforming the institution of policing. I will also create a Commission on Public Safety Oversight and Accountability (“the Commission”) that will ensure that policing is safe for all New Yorkers, making binding decisions on policies and priorities for policing.

**14. Who do you think should have the final say on discipline in the police department? How would you ensure penalties are imposed on police officers that commensurate with the gravity of their wrongdoing?**

My policing plan creates a major shift in disciplinary action. Final disciplinary authority for police misconduct will no longer rest with the Police Commissioner. It will be in the hands of a new all-civilian neutral body. The Commission will have final disciplinary authority for police misconduct, be independent of the NYPD, and will sit above it. The creation of The Commission fixes a fundamental and structural flaw in accountability for the NYPD by ensuring that the NYPD is not answerable only to itself. The Commission is an oversight body that will have the capacity to not just review the NYPD’s practices, but take the insights of the community, and use data and research to make binding decisions on policies and priorities for policing that address abuse and discriminatory practice, and ensure that the police response is in keeping with our overall vision of public safety.

**15. Do you support allowing the Civilian Complaint Review Board's (CCRB) to initiate an investigations without having to wait for an individual complaint?**

Yes

**Comments**

**16. Do you support granting the CCRB prompt and full access to footage from body-worn cameras, police officers' employment history and disciplinary records and all other document and materials in the possession of the NYPD relevant to its investigations?**

Yes

**Comments**

**17. Do you support consolidating the three bodies that exercise oversight of the NYPD: the Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB), the Inspector General for the Police Department, the Mayor's Commission to Combat Police Corruption?**

No

**Comments**

**18. Do you support moving the disciplinary hearings for police officers, like those for all other City employees, to be conducted before the independent administrative law judges of OATH (Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings) rather than within the NYPD?**

**Comments**

I have proposed ending the NYPD's final authority over disciplinary actions and empowering the newly created civilian public safety commission to have final decision-making authority over police discipline, whether it originates inside the police department or in the form of recommendations for discipline in CCRB cases.

**19. Feel free to add any other policy proposals you support in regards to police accountability, misconduct, and oversight, or to effective**

**policing including functions, training, and community relations.**

I just released my policing plan, titled Creating Safe Communities and Transforming Policing. Its goal is to redefine and transform what effective policing is in order to keep all New Yorkers safe from police abuse and violence. My administration will bring public health into the realm of public safety by following the “community-driven” violence interruption model. Addressing the root causes of neighborhood violence through community outreach and collaborative problem solving is more effective at reducing crime than traditional punitive policing, which targets hotspots and prioritizes surveillance over privacy. To accomplish this, I will; expand community-based violence interruption models, strengthen the infrastructure and communication networks between local nonprofits and outreach workers to ensure teams send New Yorkers to the most relevant, accessible, and effective health and safety organizations, end the criminalization of poverty, protect domestic violence survivors while ensuring that those who come in contact with the criminal justice system have access to the support services they need to live safe, healthy, and productive lives, invest in a comprehensive and expansive citywide reentry initiative, and address the crisis of mental health and homelessness with investment, not incarceration.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

**20. How would you utilize city-affiliated nonprofit organizations such as the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City in raising private revenue to supplement city agencies and programs? How would you ensure that there is sufficient transparency and accountability of funding received through such entities?**

The Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City has undertaken a wide range of impactful programs over the 25+ years of its operations, most recently NYC Unity Works, a partnership with the Ali Forney Center, which will provide training, mental health services and social supports for LGBTQI youth, which are critical to long-term success and stability. I would continue this work as Mayor, and would pursue fundraising to support innovative programs, developed in collaboration with

impacted communities. As part of these efforts, I will ensure that all funds raised through city-affiliated nonprofit organizations are regularly and comprehensively reported on, and that leadership is fair and impartial.

I hold myself and my team to the highest ethical standards and have proposed a government transparency platform as a mayoral candidate – which includes ensuring city elected officials will not be able to take outside income, prohibiting government staff from doing paid political work, and empowering and investing in the Conflict of Interest Board to conduct much needed investigations and disclosure of all meetings I and my team would have with any lobbyist. Additionally, I am looking into the constitutionality of a ban on contributions by anyone who has business before the city during the duration of my administration. New Yorkers deserve to trust their mayor, and I have pledged to be the ethical leader they need.

**21. 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.**

As a civil rights lawyer and racial justice advocate, I have direct experience on criminal justice reform and reform issues. I created a criminal justice initiative in post-apartheid South Africa and Chaired the NYC Civilian Complaint Review Board, sending the case of Eric Garner's killer to the NYPD, which resulted in that police officers removal from the force. I also chaired the Campaign to win ranked choice voting, because after doing the research, it was clear that this system empowered Black and Brown communities in the electoral system. Lastly, I was the chair of the School Diversity Advisory Committee, where I met with over 40 experts and crafted a set of recommendations for the DOE.

**22. In light of everything we have discussed above, why do want to be mayor?**

I am running for Mayor because I am a change making leader who can bring New Yorkers together to recover from the COVID-19 crisis in a way that reimagines New York City so that it can be a city where we all can thrive. My philosophy is shaped both by my parents' civil rights and economic

justice organizing, living in a gentrifying Black community and attending a segregated school. I those experiences taught me how government and policy inscribed structural inequities and that people impacted must be authors of new ones that dismantle what's unjust and co-create what will support dignity and justice.

I went to law school to do that work. As a civil rights attorney, advocate and nonprofit organization leader, I have spent three decades confronting injustice and working in partnerships to create solutions to systemic problems from inadequate public school funding, access to health care, criminal justice reform and digital divide issues, among many others. I am the only candidate in this race that has formulated and built change making with communities outside of government and has also served as a member of the senior leadership team in City Hall where I had to help make real change and became thoroughly familiar with the inner workings of the mayor's office.

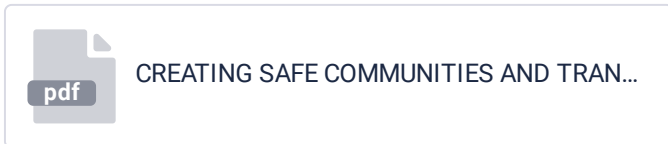
There, I delivered for New Yorkers on civil and human rights, women and minority-owned businesses, universal broadband, and much more. And I did it by pulling people together inside and outside of government - from helping breakthrough the log jam on the first Sanctuary City legislation to getting every single unit in Queensbridge Houses free city broadband. After City Hall I was able to get the case against Daniel Pantaleo to the NYPD and retain civilian protection of that trial, which eventually got him off the force.

I am uniquely positioned to be a transformative leader because I know how to marshal all of the government's resources to serve our people and know who has not been served well by the government and how to change that. I will make history, not deals. From a place of principles, I will transcend business-as-usual tinkering and set this City on the path to transformation so that we develop without displacement, a job with a future, an education system that sees all of our children as exceptional and puts the public back in public safety and more. Justice and dignity require it.

This is within our reach, but it requires bold leadership that fearlessly confronts the realities New Yorkers face in partnership with our communities. I have spent three decades doing just that as a civil rights attorney, racial justice advocate, non-profit leader, and as a member of the senior leadership team in City Hall responsible for civil and human rights, women and minority-owned businesses, universal broadband, and much more. I

left city government and became the Senior Vice President for Social Justice and joined the faculty at the New School, and stayed engaged in change-making outside of government employment. I served as the Chair of the NYC Civilian Complaint Review Board and also Co-Chaired the School Diversity Advisory Group convened by the Chancellor of the Department of Education. I will fight for New Yorkers of all races, religions, classes, and sexualities. My vision is a New York that rises from the ashes of twin pandemics – coronavirus and systemic racism – that deny investment for people of color. New Yorkers cannot afford the politics of least resistance and deserve leadership that will beat a path to shared prosperity – to become one city, rising together, out of the ashes and into a future we build and live together.

**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.**

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