



Mayoral Candidate Name: Maya Wiley

UJA-Federation of New York's Mayoral Candidate Questionnaire

- 1. Please describe the most significant challenges you believe NYC will be facing at the start of 2022, and how, should you be elected, you would address these challenges. Please provide specific plans.**

NYC has been battling racial and economic injustice for years. Unfortunately, the pandemic only exacerbated these inequities. The centerpiece of my economic recovery plan is New Deal New York, which invests \$10 billion toward a works progress infrastructure, stimulus, and jobs program. 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. Covid-19 hit communities of color the hardest, especially in industries dominated by Black women and other women of color. NDNY will prioritize procurement for all projects from local MWBE businesses, righting the wrongs of racial and economic injustice, as well as the exacerbated disproportionate outcomes facing communities of color due to covid. Infrastructure investments in this plan include \$3 billion in building a climate resilient New York, \$2 billion toward transforming NYCHA and specifically public housing, and \$2 billion in both digital and physical infrastructure. Additionally, my Gun Violence Prevention Plan seeks to address racial inequity by acknowledging that violence is a public health crisis built on the failure to address racial and economic injustice. We will invest in community-based organizations and expertise that have a demonstrated history of reducing gun violence, such as job creation, mental health resources, and through the expansion of Summer Youth Employment Programs. We will create an \$18 million participatory justice process in communities struggling to stem gun violence and fund it with divested NYPD funds. This program will center community control and decision-making, empower CBOs and nonprofits, grow their capacity and reach in their communities, and recycle both funds and public health resources back into the communities they serve.

Another major challenge that deserves recognition and serious attention is our school system; a deeply inequitable institution made worse by the pandemic. The current administration gained much criticism for their lack of transparency and clear direction on the opening and closing of schools and the implementation of remote learning. Administrators, teachers, students, and their families have borne the brunt of this failure to act, and it must be remedied immediately. As Mayor, my K12 education plan is centered around healing from the pandemic and restoring faith in our educational institutions and each other. Some of our educational priorities include ensuring every student has access to technology, implementing culturally responsive and trauma informed practices, and delivering intense academic interventions and support, especially for students with disabilities and multilingual learners that were denied their constitutionally protected right to services during the pandemic. Other priorities include integration at the classroom, school, and city level by removing admissions screens, restructuring blended learning, and the expansion of real-world educational and career exploration. Lastly, my plan centers on investments in mental and physical health resources and opportunities. We will ensure a nurse in every school, arts education in every school every day, and counselors trained in CBT & DBT practices.

- 2. What previous experience(s) qualify you to be an effective Mayor? Why?**

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 break through 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 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.

3. Please share your personal experience with managing organization(s). How does this management experience translate to your proposed management of New York City's 300,000+ workforce and associated operational complexities and challenges?

I have been managing organizations my entire career and believe I carry indispensable knowledge that will serve me and our City well as Mayor. Throughout my career, I have managed organizations and teams at every level and every size. I founded the Center for Social Inclusion in 2001, where I was able to create an organization whose founding principles were grounded in the development of equitable policy solutions that addressed the racial and economic injustices plaguing our communities. I was able to build CSI from an idea into a \$12m national nonprofit organization working on issues such as digital equity, climate justice.

In addition, I am the only candidate who has served in the Senior Cabinet in City Hall. Therefore, I know the strategies and tactics necessary to ensure effective collaboration across government agencies in order to make real change. I have a demonstrated history of being successful in this arena. I managed the Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprise program, and was able to expand contracts from \$500 million to \$1.6 billion. I led the charge on getting universal broadband to Queensbridge Houses by managing the partnerships between NYCHA residents, community members, city agencies, and broadband providers. I was successful in achieving this goal

that no one thought was possible, because I was able to bring together organizations that had no prior experience working together. I will employ this management experience as Mayor and continue to make historic change.

4. How do you intend to work with other sectors of New York City, including business and not-for-profit, to move your Mayoral agenda forward?

Listening, learning and partnership is not a slogan to me, but the definition of my leadership style. When I am Mayor, I will convene groups of community, business, and not-for-profit leaders, and external stakeholders to listen and learn about what is going on in the community. This dialogue will allow us to work together to identify potential areas for collaboration, and propose culturally appropriate solutions.

With regard to nonprofits specifically, I have been the leader of a nonprofit organization and worked alongside them. I appreciate the critical role that these organizations play in providing contracted services to our City residents, and will work with them to solve problems at the community level. For example, my policing plan includes centering the capacity of nonprofits to partner with the police in order to connect both offenders and victims to the appropriate social services in their neighborhoods. In addition, my small business platform proposes linking vacant retail properties from the vacancy list to new and existing worker-owned co-ops and non-profit-owned retail cooperatives. We will use national best practices and launch an initiative to incentivize nonprofit developers and government agencies to directly lease real estate from landlords and sublease these spaces to nonprofits or cooperatives.

5. What is your philosophy in approaching how to balance New York City's \$90+ billion budget? Please be very specific on if/when to raise taxes; what do you see as other cost saving methods such as efficiency, reducing headcount, cutting services, etc.

New York City's devastating COVID-19 epidemic exposed deep race, class, and geographic chasms. At the top looking over are residents of wealthier, whiter communities. On average, they are living healthy, longer, mostly COVID-free lives – comparable to the best anywhere in the world. Residents of poorer communities of color had twice the number of COVID deaths. Overall, these New Yorkers can expect to live 10 years less than their more affluent neighbors. Just miles apart are two NYC census tracts - one where life expectancy is 94.6 years and another where it is just 59 years. The Mayor's job is to first narrow and then eliminate these differences.

Health care is a \$125 billion sector that employs about 600,000 people (13% of the workforce), purchases millions of goods and services produced locally, is the economic anchor of many communities, and cares for 8.2 million people. The City government's role ought to be re-framed and focused not only on the traditional roles as public health monitor and public hospital financer, but on the entire system. Creative use of the City's considerable powers, including zoning and construction permits, control of public health, sanitation, and emergency services, regulation of Wi-Fi, purchase of \$9 billion annually of health insurance for employees, and source of freshwater gives the Mayor substantial influence over the mostly private system. The underlying issue is how to harness this enormous engine more effectively on behalf of all New Yorkers. My administration will focus on efforts to shift funding to maintain vital safety net providers and to more fairly distribute the burdens of providing needed care in underserved communities among all health care providers, including private systems that do not contribute their fair share.

Moreover, we cannot afford to fall into the cycle of austerity politics. Austerity will only hurt our people. This is why, as the first plank of my Economic Recovery Plan, I announced New Deal New York, a \$10B capital investment program to put residents back to work and invest in the future of our communities. A smart recovery is an equitable recovery and relies on investment in a sustainable economy, not on austerity measures that tell hungry people to simply tighten their belts. With this in mind, my plan will create a 5-year centrally managed \$10B capital spending program for public works projects. The program will fund much-needed development, infrastructure repairs, and enhancements. The fund would consist of committed unspent capital funds and new capital dollars financed by City debt.

But make no mistake, we have a revenue crisis and need more additional revenue than we can raise on our own. Rethinking our revenue strategies calls us to come together and ask the wealthiest New Yorkers to step up and contribute what they can. This includes revenue options such as a millionaire's tax, pied-a-tier tax, and vacancy tax on commercial properties, and a halt to the stock transfer tax rebate. These are taxes that would be resolved in Albany, but there is a new progressive wind in our capitol so the chance to pass these types of taxes has never been higher. We can generate new money by leveraging city assets that businesses want to access--from our rooftops for telecommunications to our world-class workforce for industry. We must also leverage the power of our tens of billions of dollars in annual governmental spending that we will spend, revenue crisis or no. New York City's budget is larger than that of most states and our spending has a big enough impact to further important social and economic goals.

Clearly, supporting Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises is an integral part of the puzzle and we will expand our efforts in this area, by prioritizing procurement from local MWBE businesses for all projects. We also need to engage in new kinds of investments that support our recovery while addressing the structural issues that cause racial and gender inequities. New Deal New York will target investments based on a comprehensive analysis of capital needs across five boroughs, using metrics including racial disparities in income, unemployment, capital need, and city investment over the past decade, to ensure capital dollars are utilized in the most underinvested communities first.

I was proud to be the first candidate for Mayor to endorse Invest in Our NY. Coalitions like Invest In Our New York are leading the charge on ending tax breaks for the wealthiest New Yorkers, and ensuring revenue benefits the most vulnerable among us. I look forward to partnering with them to ensure an equitable economic recovery, in addition to the economic reforms already laid out in my New Deal New York plan.

6. Please share your understanding of the relationship between nonprofits, and human service provision on behalf of the City of New York. Is the current relationship sustainable? What are the largest barriers to success and how will you address these to ensure the long-term viability of the provision of services and non-profit sector?

Ensuring nonprofits have a physical space to do their work is critical to their ability to contribute to the city's economy. My small business platform proposes linking vacant retail properties from the vacancy list to new and existing worker-owned co-ops and non-profit-owned retail cooperatives. We will use national best practices and launch an initiative to incentivize nonprofit developers and government agencies to directly lease real estate from landlords and sublease these spaces to nonprofits or cooperatives.

We must expand high-quality, affordable financial services to low-income and immigrant communities, communities of color, and gig workers by partnering with nonprofit and mission-driven community development financial institutions, especially community development credit unions.

Nonprofits play a significant role in supporting our communities and providing essential services for vulnerable New Yorkers. My policing plan includes centering the capacity of nonprofits to partner with the police in order to connect both offenders and victims to the appropriate social services in their neighborhoods. Collaboration between nonprofits, other CBOs, and the police will bring nonprofits more business by connecting them to more New Yorkers seeking support.

I have been the leader of a non-profit organization and worked alongside them. I appreciate the critical role that these organizations play in providing contracted services to our City residents. We need to simplify our often byzantine procurement and payment processes and make it easier for organizations to partner with us. Organizations can't be expected to "front" funds for months while contracts slowly wind their way through our

system. I am committed to working with the nonprofit sector to achieve needed reforms, and will look to organizations as important partners in program design and service delivery to communities. These organizations play a critical role in the communities they serve. And together with these communities, they are the experts in how we should deliver services. That's why it is critical that the Administration engage them in a spirit of partnership, collaboration and shared goals. My Administration would give nonprofit organizations and communities an important role in program design and evaluation and would heed their expert advice.

7. **We've seen a dramatic increase in hateful rhetoric and acts of violence in recent years, including a rise in anti-Semitism and, most recently, an escalation of attacks against Asian Americans. There has been much debate about how to address hatred and increase individual and community security. "Defund the police" has become a rallying call for some – but what it translates to in policies varies widely. What's your response to those who call for "defunding the police," and how do you envision ensuring safety and security for all New Yorkers?**

I have spent my career fighting against hate and for equity. As Counsel to the Mayor, the City Commission on Human Rights was under my supervision and I fought to have City Hall give it the focus and resources it deserves. As Mayor, no one will have to fight me to prioritize anti-discrimination and anti-hate work.

The fight against hate crimes must be multi-faceted and cross-departmental. CCHR and NYPD are the two agencies that must take the lead in an effective approach against hate. CCHR will lead the enforcement within government agencies and a citywide education campaign against hate. The NYPD will be tasked with protecting New Yorkers across the City, whether that be at synagogues or mosques or in communities at large.

I will bolster CCHR's education and enforcement capacity by moving the Mayor's Office of Hate Crimes - which has consistently underperformed - into CCHR to ensure that it has the legal weight of the City behind it. The CCHR Office of Hate Crimes will work with Community leaders, the DOE, and others to establish and implement citywide educational curricula against antisemitism, islamophobia, transphobia, anti-Asian bias, and more.

The NYPD also has a large role to play in the fight against antisemitism and hate. We must put the public back in public safety. This means that City Hall -- in consultation with communities, must establish the priorities and procedures for the NYPD. It also means rightsizing the department to ensure it isn't performing tasks that are not policing and focusing the NYPD on a problems-oriented approach that allows them to focus on areas of greatest need, including protecting New Yorkers against Hate Crimes, which is a policing function. I will also examine the possibility of adding NYPD monitored cameras outside of high-risk locations, while heavily balancing concerns around data privacy and potential abuse of data.

With that being said, the NYPD must be rightsized, and we must put the public back in public safety. This means a top-to-bottom restructuring of the NYPD, beginning with strong civilian oversight at the front end of policing -- policies that make clear what policing is and is not, what conduct will not be tolerated, as well as the priorities of policing, which I describe as problem-oriented, rather than punitive.

When I am Mayor, I will do the following:

1. Freeze the incoming NYPD and DOCCs cadet classes for two years, reducing the NYPD headcount by 2,500 officers, and use the savings to fund a Universal Community Care income, which would give our city's lowest income families a \$5,000 annual caregiving income.
2. Run a full audit of the NYPD's budget -- including the out of budget expenses such as settlements -- to assess the facts and make necessary cuts, including to the number of uniformed officers.
3. Move mental health calls, routine traffic violations, and school safety out of the NYPD.
4. Assert civilian oversight of all policies and priorities of the NYPD on the front end. We cannot only assert civilian oversight to engage in discipline. We must prevent the nefarious acts from happening at the outset.
5. Hire a police commissioner that has not just moved up the ranks of the NYPD rank and file. We need a new model of leadership to work as a partner with the people to transform policing.

6. Create a shift from “containment and control” policing that produces strategies like unconstitutional “stop and frisks” and make “community and problem-oriented policing” the model, which requires collaboration and partnership with other agencies and communities. This approach focuses on underlying conditions identified and understood with communities and drawing in and working with other governmental partners to solve them. Eric Garner lost his life because he allegedly sold an untaxed cigarette. A community and problem-oriented approach would have worked with store owners, who were complaining, and also other agencies to address that poverty meant people were selling untaxed goods and how to find solutions that did not require an arrest for being poor. Too often the NYPD responds to problems of poverty, not of crime. We need to ensure that if the NYPD receives a call about a poverty problem, the right city agencies are involved and cycling people through prison is not the solution.

7. End the criminalization of poverty and close Rikers while creating more alternatives to incarceration and re-entry programs.

8. Invest in what keeps our communities safe like youth programs, job and workforce creation and other community-sourced safety initiatives. The Gun Violence Prevention Plan that I released in November is an example of this approach. This plan is entirely focused on investing in the programs that actually keep our communities safe, including the creation of an \$18 million Participatory Justice program that will give communities the resources they need to decide what and how they want to invest in their neighborhoods.

8. The New York City government has had a tradition of supporting Holocaust survivors, from providing case management to vaccinations. As Mayor, would you commit to continuing to ensure that New York’s low-income Holocaust survivors remain cared for?

As Mayor, I will commit to continuing to ensure that New York’s low-income Holocaust survivors remain cared for. I am running for Mayor because we need someone running our City that will always be a champion for all New Yorkers, including those from low-income, historically marginalized, immigrant, refugee, and hard-working communities. I will maintain a strong relationship with Selfhelp Community Services, Inc, which runs 7 program sites across New York City. These sites provide critical care that keep communities safe and healthy, such as homecare, housekeeping, and social/cultural programs. I developed my Universal Community Care plan because I truly believe our government and economy should uplift and reward the New Yorkers providing “care work” every day without financial compensation. This plan will build community care centers in high-needs communities across the 5 boroughs and provide services akin to Selfhelp, Inc. I look forward to exploring ways that these community hubs can connect elderly Holocaust survivors to Selfhelp Inc, and provide more comfortable public spaces for survivors to spend time and meet like-minded people.

9. Feeding those in need is central to many New York City human service programs – from seniors to Universal Pre-K, to school-based meals. However, specialized food supports, such as kosher and halal, are too often not incorporated in the service provision. As Mayor, would you commit to have your food insecurity policies always include kosher and halal food?

Yes. Children have a harder time learning if they are food and housing insecure. Funding schools means funding and expanding free/reduced price lunch services. I will look into expanding the community schools model, and help schools partner with CBOs that locally prepare healthy meals, and meals that cover a range of cultures and dietary restrictions. Funding CBOs and giving them autonomy in how they partner and spend their money will help provide healthy meal options for students.

10. To gain the Democratic Socialist of America (DSA) endorsement for local office, DSA asked candidates to complete a questionnaire, including a question asking candidates to commit to not travel to Israel. Have you and/or will you reject any candidate questionnaires that ask you to commit to refusing to travel to Israel? More broadly, do you commit to opposing the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement against the state of Israel?

I do not support the tactic to Boycott, Divestment and Sanction Israel. As a Civil Rights attorney, I do support all people's first amendment right to protest and boycott. This includes BDS.