



Waterfront Alliance Mayoral Candidates Survey Submitted by Raymond McGuire



Question 1: As a coastal city, New York City will be hit by climate change especially hard (indeed, the effects have already started). What are your top priorities for adapting New York City (i.e. infrastructure, investments, ecology) to a future of extreme storms and sea level rise?

My major infrastructure plan is to accelerate resilient and sustainable infrastructure throughout New York City with **a focus on Sandy-impacted neighborhoods like Coney Island, Hunts Point, Lower Manhattan, Red Hook, and the Rockaways**. I will invest in green energy projects, especially those that unlock permanent job opportunities like the development of a wind energy hub in South Brooklyn and the North Shore of Staten Island, which will boost maritime industrial jobs. Through public private partnerships, I will focus on installing more solar panels, constructing green roofs, and robust building retrofit programs designed to enhance energy efficiency and environmental wellness.

Question 2: New York City has 520 miles of waterfront. In the last 20-30 years, waterfronts have rapidly changed. Give one example of positive change you have seen along the waterfront

I am excited to see projects like the one in the South Brooklyn Marine Terminal in Sunset Park to create a port capable of serving as a staging area for all wind turbine development projects across the tri-state area. This would kickstart massive job creation in renewable energy.

Question 3: Give one example of a shortcoming or negative aspect of New York City's 520 miles of waterfront.

We need to re-imagine the NYC Ferry System. Operated by the New York City Economic Development Corporation (EDC), **the ferry system has not been**



effectively serving residents and has been increasingly more expensive to manage. NYC Ferry has consistently lagged in ridership due to bad scheduling and routes. Pre-pandemic the Ferry had under 5 million riders over the entire year, which is less than the Subway had in an entire day. In addition to lagging ridership, which has been criticized as not being accessible to low income and underserved communities, the ferry requires a subsidy of \$10.73 per rider, more than 10 times the rider subsidy for the subway and double that of the Staten Island ferry. Diverting people to the ferries, a clean form of transportation, would have beneficial environmental effects. I am committed to an overhaul of the ferry system.

Question 4: Covid-19 has underscored the need for quality open space and outdoor recreation. Waterfront open space is unevenly available across the five boroughs. What are your concrete recommendations for addressing disparities in quality open space access across waterfront communities?

I will focus on accessible open spaces especially in marginalized areas, which includes additional park spaces, playgrounds, and outdoor learning centers along the waterfront. This is a great way for New Yorkers to engage with their local communities and businesses, and can help create a more liveable city. There are other opportunities to transform the public realm like the proposed beach in Manhattan and the re-purposing of existing infrastructure as was done with the Highline. As Mayor, I would look into further improvements.

Question 5: Historically, many neighborhoods have suffered from environmentally racist policies from power plant siting to housing in the floodplain to industrial waste in communities and waterways. What are your concrete recommendations for policies that will turn the tide and provide climate just solutions to our City's most vulnerable populations?

My Comeback Plan will provide rent relief to small businesses and provide resources to struggling small property owners to help them meet the requirements of LL 97, which can incentivize them to renegotiate leases and provide rent forgiveness to their tenants. I would offer tax credits and other economic incentives/financing assistance for the installation of solar panels on roofs. Right now, New York City has a property tax abatement in effect to defray some of the costs of installing a solar project although this will expire in 2023. The abatement should be extended, and I will expand this program and work with the State to tie this directly with incentives offered by New York State Energy Research and Development Authority. We must also embrace new technologies and environmentally-sound building materials that will ensure a sustainable and affordable future.



Question 6: How do you see the harbor and the maritime sector playing a central role in the City's economy and recovery in the years ahead?

I aim to have a comprehensive city-wide resiliency plan. The plan would require robust engagement between the City and its vulnerable communities and strong input from the science and engineering world. **With airports, marine transfer facilities, and transportation hubs all close to the water, a major storm surge could wreak havoc on the City's infrastructure, so I will advocate for enhanced preparedness.**