

INTRODUCTION

What is your name as it will appear on the ballot?

Nina Ahmad

What office are you seeking?

City Council member At-Large

Campaign Committee Name & Address:

Nina for Philly

Campaign Website Address:

ninaforphilly.com

Campaign Contact (Name, Phone & Email Address): **will not be published*

What is your fundraising goal for your campaign? How much have you raised so far, and what is your cash-on-hand? **will not be published*

Candidate Introduction:

I'm running to make Philadelphia a healthier, stronger city. All of our challenges are, at their root, health challenges. From crime and gun violence to housing and the environment, if we make Philadelphia a healthier city, we can make it a stronger, safer city. As a biomedical scientist, I've spent my life taking on these kinds of challenges and I've used science and data to find new solutions to old problems.

Growing up during the very violent war of Independence that gave birth to Bangladesh, I will always remember that I am alive because of the ultimate

sacrifice of over 3 million freedom fighters and the lifelong trauma of over 250,000 women and girls who were brutalized as a tool of war. This lived experience has guided me in all my political activism. I know what it's like to feel unsafe, like so many of our children impacted by the rampant gun violence we face. I understand how educational opportunity can transform lives, as it did for me when I was able to come here and earn a Ph.D. I know how critical from both a human rights perspective and economic standpoint it is to welcome immigrants. As a Councilmember this worldview will continue to inform my advocacy for all those who have been systematically marginalized and excluded as I stand in solidarity with those in this country who've been fighting for justice over 400 years.

ROADWAY SAFETY

For 5th Square's positions on these issues see: https://www.5thsq.org/2023_issues

Short Response:

1. a) Will you commit to reducing Philadelphia's annual traffic deaths in half by 2026?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other: _____

- b) Do you support redesigning Philadelphia's most dangerous roadways if this means eliminating travel lanes for automobiles and parking spaces?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other: _____

- c) Daylighting is a pedestrian safety measure achieved by replacing curb parking spaces near an intersection with flexible posts, planters, or bollards – increasing visibility for pedestrians and drivers. Do you support daylighting more intersections in Philadelphia if this means removing parking spaces?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other: _____

2. Will you support a ballot measure to establish a PHL Department of Transportation, combining the transportation division of the Streets Department with the Office of Transportation, Infrastructure, and Sustainability (oTIS)?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other: _____

3. After two terms in office, the Kenney Administration will have built 30 miles of protected bicycle lanes. Will you support an expansion of Philadelphia's network of protected bicycle lanes by an additional 30 miles by 2028?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other: _____

4. a) The pilot speed camera program on Roosevelt Blvd has changed driver behavior, improved safety, and saved lives. Do you support making the speed cameras on Roosevelt Blvd permanent?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other: _____

- b) Do you support expanding speed camera enforcement to more high-crash corridors across Philadelphia?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other: _____

Use this space if you'd like to elaborate on any of the above short response questions:

Traffic deaths—I am very concerned about car vs. pedestrian and biker injuries and fatalities and would like to see the data differentiated by absence/presence of sidewalks, vehicle type (cars, SUVs, light truck) and demographic data of victims so that the problems can be addressed effectively. This disproportionately impacts our children but just in the past month I have personally known someone driving a scooter crossing a street in the crosswalk get his foot run over by a car driver turning onto the crosswalk. The injured person who broke four toes, is a restaurant worker and is now unemployed for the foreseeable future.

Bike Lane Expansion—[best practices in other jurisdictions](#) have indicated that the establishment of bike lanes can be much more expansive and happen much more quickly than what has occurred during the Kenney administration. As someone who views public issues and policy intersectionally, such expansion to be effective would need to be considered concurrently with gun violence and crime that is rampant in our City.

Speed Cameras—this can be an important safety mechanism. In my section of the City (NW) speeding on Lincoln Drive is a serious problem.

Long Response:

5. Despite the city taking a Vision Zero pledge to reduce traffic deaths to zero by 2030, more than 120 people died on city streets in 2022. What will you do to significantly lower the rates of traffic deaths in Philadelphia?

Traffic calming cushions need to be more accessible, with less bureaucracy for neighbors to get them installed. There shouldn't have to be a fatality or serious injury in order to take these critical preventive measures. I would advocate for more funding in the capital budget for the installation of all types of traffic calming devices and the creation of staffing to coordinate all Vision Zero initiatives. While this impacts all residents there are certain categories of residents that are at greater risk, especially our children, the disabled and seniors. So a Vision Zero Coordinator will in addition to tasks concerning the condition of our streets, need to be coordinating outreach in our schools, senior centers and neighborhoods to better respond to the specific needs of certain groups and differences in geography. My position as Deputy Mayor for Public Engagement involved working with diverse populations throughout our City so I am attuned to the importance of listening to variety of concerned of residents throughout the City. So this is a skill-set that I will carry forward when evaluating initiatives and/or proposing new approaches to solving our City's most intractable problems.

6. Many curb cuts, crosswalks, bus stops, and sidewalks across Philadelphia are routinely blocked by illegally-parked vehicles. How will you address this specific problem?

A sustained ticketing and towing program would generate the data and provide opportunity for analysis (rather than anecdotal reports) of who is blocking these critical spots so that a more targeted policy solutions can be crafted. Public awareness campaigns work. Case in point cigarettes which used to touted as good for digestion are now clearly embedded in our consciousness as a toxin and health hazard. Impactful PSA's with consequences of "blocking sidewalks" in video clips etc. Long term goal is to encourage use of public transit and thereby reduce use of vehicles, but that will happen with improved safety, more access points, reliable service etc. However, Philadelphia has 2,172,896 parking spaces, (Research Institute for Housing America, a division of the Mortgage Bankers Association) corresponding to 1.4 parking spaces/Philadelphian. Philadelphia keeps no official or citywide count of parking spaces!! The analysis of the spatial distribution of parking space inventories can identify parking shortages and expose parking surpluses, and it may create opportunity to direct development to correspond to parking availability and be a City that contain fewer unused parking spaces. I propose

collection of such data by the City (collaboration of multiple departments and the Parking authority) and using technology to create a tool that shows available parking in real time so we don't get frustrated circling the block.

7. What is your plan to ensure the city's sidewalks are safe and usable for all pedestrians, including people with disabilities and families with strollers?

Our sidewalks need greater repair. Having well -paved sidewalks is critical for personal safety and the economic viability of our communities. Our sidewalks are as much part of the public infrastructure as our roads and highways. Currently, property owners are responsible for the maintenance and repair of sidewalks along their homes and businesses. Lax enforcement means property owners can ignore the notice from City to repair without consequences, leaving unsafe sidewalk conditions indefinitely. In addition, with 23% poverty rate, it is an issue of equity as well. Sidewalks in good repair are a necessary public good that everyone is entitled to, and not a luxury that only wealthy property owners can afford to have.

I would investigate a system of a payment plan and tax credit based on income to help homeowners pay for sidewalks, and further look into the City being fully responsible for sidewalk upkeep. The benefits of City responsibility for sidewalk safety would ensure uniform quality with City and ADA standards in mind; would enable economies of scale that are not available to property owners who complete their own repairs, making repairs more cost effective and meet the required safety standards. There is already a tool, Pedestrian Portal, designed by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) that has sidewalk inventory data, and the analysis identifies dangerous sidewalk issues and can help prioritize pedestrian projects. City funding of sidewalks will also allow advocating for funds from State and Federal government (now that earmarks are being funded again).

Sidewalk quality is not the only requirement for pedestrian safety. There also needs to be adequate street lighting, and finally to help with the air quality in an around our sidewalks, there needs to be street trees which are equitably placed in all neighborhoods of the City.

PUBLIC SPACE

For 5th Square's positions on these issues see: https://www.5thsq.org/2023_issues

Short Response:

1. Will you support an expansion of the current municipal street sweeping program, even if it means non-compliant motorists may receive parking violations or have their vehicles towed?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other: _____

2. Do you support easing regulations on outdoor dining streeteries and facilitating more parklets and pedestrian plazas even if this means eliminating space for parking?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other: _____

Use this space if you'd like to elaborate on any of the above short response questions:

Outdoor dining—The eateries, a creative response to keep businesses afloat during the worst of the pandemic should be congratulated and supported as much as possible. Now that the pandemic is slowing down, the City should not over-regulate and bureaucratize these businesses out of existence. If additional regulations are necessary and involve more costs, then the City should be supportive and formulate solutions in order to help keep these establishments functioning so that they meet the health and safety standards.

Long Response:

3. Place-based interventions like greening vacant lots, repairing abandoned homes, and planting street trees in Philadelphia is linked to a reduction in violent crime, a decrease in illegal dumping, and lower rates of depression among residents. How will your office work to accomplish these place-based interventions in historically-disinvested neighborhoods?

The value of this greening and investment has been demonstrated through research led by Penn Urban Health lab faculty director Eugenia South, MD, MSHP, an assistant professor of Emergency Medicine in the Perelman School of Medicine. These studies have shown the impact of vacant lots, blighted houses, and lack of trees and other greenspaces on rates of violence and poor health outcomes in predominantly Black and brown neighborhoods, including increased rates of depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and heart disease compared to their white counterparts.

The Philadelphia Land Care Program, run by the Pennsylvania Horticultural

Society, has been an amazing success. It is cost effective and beneficial to the neighborhoods in which it has been implemented. It hires local landscapers and has created jobs as well as safety zones and restores environmental degradation. City officials have a Constitutional duty under our State Constitution to preserve the quality of the air, land and water and this project is certainly evidence that they are abiding by that requirement. This environmental protection effort should be expanded and celebrated.

Some feedback from the PHS has indicated that providing a tree canopy that can significantly reduce the heat index can be resisted by some homeowners who mention lack of street cleaning (of leaves and debris), roots are growing out, and the concrete is lifted up and root systems damaging the sewer system. I support a robust public engagement (recognizing the potential cost burden for tree upkeep to some low/moderate income families) with Philadelphians, listening to their concerns and informing them of available options etc. For example, sharing information that most of a tree's root system lives in the top 12 to 24 inches of soil beneath the sidewalk while home water and sewer lines run on average six to seven feet below the ground may open opportunities for tree plantings in neighborhoods. Information on various ways to mitigate such issues include PHS selecting trees with roots that don't seek water quite so aggressively, residents can also do their part by watering their trees properly; only a thirsty tree will go out of its way to get what it needs. Making sure the pipes are in good condition etc. all point to upkeep, maintenance and full coordination with city services.

4. Philadelphia's public spaces suffer from two main types of improper waste disposal: littering and illegal dumping. For decades, the City's reduction and removal efforts have been woefully inadequate. What would you do to solve this issue?

Clearly increased enforcement, which involves adequate staffing and more camera installation, is necessary to address improper waste disposal, illegal dumping and littering. As a member of City Council, I would prioritize enforcement of dumping regulation and support adequate staffing during the budget and appropriations processes, conduct inquiries about the relevant departments' past performance and exact promises for future improvements. Citizen engagement could also help to support increased enforcement if, for example, a phone app was developed to send real-time photos of violations and violators. Tasking the Environmental Justice Advisory Commission is yet another way to collect data as to the extent of such dumping in Environmental Justice neighborhoods. And finally, City Council can through its oversight

function conduct investigatory public hearings to continue to discover the extent of the problem and the steps being taken to rectify it. For example, the City issued a Zero Waste Action plan in 2017. Seventy-five percent of the waste created is in the commercial and Construction and Demolition sectors. It appears that the City Council has not even publicly investigated what progress, if any, has been made to lessen the waste from these sectors. (Although in 2020 a Council resolution passed to look at some related issues of waste disposal, no hearing was ever conducted.) So these questions will remain unanswered without the vigilance of individual Council members combined with lobbying from groups like the 5th Square. While seemingly mundane, the impact of increased trash dumping and C & D waste has serious consequences for neighborhoods comprised primarily of people of color.

As to trash and littering in general, there needs to be more public trash receptacles with compacting capacity. It is equally important that we divert recyclable trash from our waste stream. Since the pandemic, our city's recycling rates plummeted from pre-pandemic rates which were already at historic lows. This is unacceptable. As a member of City Council I will strongly advocate, particularly during the annual budget deliberations for complete compliance with state recycling law and federal regulations which includes the prohibition of so-called chemical recycling of plastics. And I would expand such diversion to include polystyrene foam food service products.

5. The city has struggled to staff and adequately fund city services, which has resulted in reduced hours at libraries, pools, and recreation centers. How would you ensure consistent and convenient hours for these facilities?

Nationally, public-sector employment was hammered in the immediate aftermath of the pandemic. Removing barriers to being employed by the City can take a page (as applicable) out of Governor Shapiro's new executive order of opening "the doors of opportunity" for non-degree holding constituents who "just want a fair shot". This could include addressing stringent residency requirements as well. Pathways of growth within such departments will help attract employees, who should have the ability to move vertically and horizontally both within departments and interdepartmentally. In 2022, City Council approved funding to create a new centralized recruiting unit, which Philadelphia did not have adding to the archaic nature of doing business. A strategic plan to attract and retain employees and modernization to streamline the work processes is critical.

TRANSPORTATION & TRANSIT

For 5th Square's positions on these issues see: https://www.5thsq.org/2023_issues

Short Response:

1. Do you support the City of Philadelphia enrolling all municipal employees into the SEPTA Key Advantage program?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other: _____

2. Do you support the City establishing a fare discount program for low-income riders?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other: _____

3. Do you support congestion pricing - a toll for vehicles entering Center City and University City during peak travel times - with funding used for improving public transportation?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other: _____

4. Do you support increasing the cost of monthly residential parking permits and using the funds for improving public transportation?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other: _____

5. a) Do you support expanding bus-only lanes throughout Philadelphia, even if this means removing a lane of travel for personal vehicles or parking?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other: _____

- b) Do you support using camera technology to enforce bus-only lanes and bus stops by ticketing violators?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other: _____

6. Will you advocate for increasing local transit funding to SEPTA?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other: _____

7. Do you support a subway/metro line for Roosevelt Blvd?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other: _____

8. The City of Denver launched a popular e-bike rebate program in an effort to reduce vehicle miles traveled. The rebate program offered \$1,200 for income-qualified residents and \$400 for everyone else for e-bike purchases. Do you support a similar program here in Philadelphia?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other: _____

9. Do you support micro-mobility initiatives such as scooter share programs for Philadelphia?

[☒] Yes [☐] No [☐] Other: _____

Use this space if you'd like to elaborate on any of the above short response questions:

Increasing local investment in Philadelphia from SEPTA—the City needs higher allocation of budget as opposed to the suburbs. That will take political advocacy as the majority of the SEPTA Board comes from the suburbs.

Long Response:

10. What are your ideas for combating Philadelphia's problem with traffic congestion?

I believe that traffic congestion will ease when mass transit is safe, clean and convenient. As long as our transit system is unreliable with long waits with filthy transit platforms, we will never decrease traffic congestion due to the use of private vehicles. I commend the City for its development of The Philadelphia Transit Plan, but the challenge will be to expand civic involvement in the redesign of our transit system in a way that is equitable, transparent and inclusive. One thing that I haven't seen used in Philadelphia is the encouragement of car-pooling and ride-sharing. I believe doing more with economic incentivizing as opposed to punishing those with the least access to real alternatives.

11. What are your solutions to ensure SEPTA rebuilds its ridership post-pandemic?

Safety in our current public transit system is an absolute minimum. I will continue my advocacy which began because of passengers being attacked and raped on subways and platforms and hold SEPTA accountable to make the long overdue changes. Degradation of public safety on mass transit cannot be normalized, allowing authorities to shrug their shoulders and leave it up to taxpayers to fend for themselves."

But beyond that, a functional public transportation system, that also maximizes environmental protection, is absolutely necessary for our City to become healthier and grow economically. Investment into mass transit is money well spent.

I will consult with those most impacted, including the [Philly Transit Riders Union](#), for specific policy suggestions as well as exploring best practices

throughout the nation such as Washington, DC and Kansas City, MO where they have already instituted free mass transit for everyone. Analysts say D.C.'s free fare system offers a good test case on how public transit can be reshaped for a post-pandemic future. And I will be looking at legislative approaches in cities like Chicago where they have enacted a Tax Increment Finance (TIF) district to expand transit lines to unserved areas. It is important to understand, as these jurisdictions have, that publicly funding mass transit is equivalent to what taxpayers already do by underwriting our roads and throughfares.

Personal Travel Habits:

1. How often do you ride a bicycle for transportation in the city?
☒ Never ☐ Yearly ☐ Monthly ☐ Weekly ☐ Daily
2. How often do you ride public transportation in the city?
☐ Never ☐ Yearly ☒ Monthly ☐ Weekly ☐ Daily
3. How often do you travel by car in the city?
☐ Never ☐ Yearly ☒ Monthly ☐ Weekly ☐ Daily
4. Will you commit to taking public transportation at least one week of each year while in office?
☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other: _____
5. How do you typically commute to work? Describe your experience traveling in Philadelphia and what you would do to improve it.

The answers above are based on practices during the pandemic. Before that, when I went into the office for work, I used public transportation on a 1-2/ week and carpooled as well.

HOUSING & LAND USE

For 5th Square's positions on these issues see: https://www.5thsq.org/2023_issues

Short Response:

1. Do you support eliminating minimum parking requirements for all of Philadelphia's zoning categories?
☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other: _____
2. Will you veto or vote against downzoning overlays?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ Other: _Evaluate on a case by case basis_____
3. Do you support legalizing Single-Room Occupancy dwellings (SROs) in all multifamily and commercial zoning districts across Philadelphia?
☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other: _____
4. Will you support designating Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) overlays city-wide, allowing increased commercial and residential zoning density near all rail transit stations in Philadelphia?
☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other: _____
5. Should our city government encourage the growth of Philadelphia's population back to 2 million residents?
☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other: _____
6. Should our zoning allow for denser housing in high-income, high-amenity neighborhoods to accommodate more residents?
☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Other: _____

Use this space if you'd like to elaborate on any of the above short response questions:

Encouraging growth of Philadelphia back to 2 million--Certainly close to a half a million increase in population would increase tax revenue and I for one would welcome such growth that will come from a variety of demographics and sectors. One important way for increasing our population will come from the welcoming of immigrants. Immigrants make an important contribution to the

economy. Philadelphia historically has been a “sanctuary” city since the abolition movement, giving refuge to those fleeing enslavement at the “Underground railroad” stops. Today, Philadelphia continues to be a welcoming city and the recent uptick in population gain can be attributed to immigrants choosing to make Philadelphia home. Most directly, immigration increases potential economic output by increasing the size of the labor force. Since many immigrants’ face barriers to enter the traditional job market, they become entrepreneurs and start small businesses which fuel the economy.

Philadelphia’s recent designation as a “certified welcoming” community, a status achieved by only 15 locales in the United States, gives us an edge in attracting newcomers and gaining global opportunities to bring in new businesses. And finally, I would be part of the advocacy landscape for federal immigration reform to legalize unauthorized immigrants resulting in increased tax revenues, increased productivity, and have the additional benefits for the children of these immigrants, generating substantial economic value for the city.

We must also redouble our commitment to improving our public school system so that young families are not fleeing the City when their children are ready for grade school. The recent ruling from the Commonwealth court noted that Pennsylvania schools don’t have the resources to adequately educate all students, and the gaps between richer and poorer school districts has rendered the system unconstitutional. This landmark case could reshape education throughout the state, since majority of districts’ funding coming from local property taxes, causing inequities in funding, with school districts in low financial wealth areas being too often underfunded such as Philadelphia. Unless there is an appeal that is sustained, this ruling is hope for optimism for leveling of the playing field for the Philadelphia school district and provides a pathway for keeping more families in our City, and thereby advance towards a 2 Million population count for the City.

Long Response:

7. The affordability crisis hits renters harder than owners. Philadelphia Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) estimates the city needs about 70,000 affordable rental units to meet demand. How will you address this affordable housing shortage?

I would advocate for permanent and increased funding for the Housing Trust Fund which would be targeted towards increasing the supply of housing for low-income families. I am also in support of the recently passed Turn The Key" program which will help facilitate the sale of 1,000 new, energy-efficient, 3 bedroom, 1½ bath homes affordable housing on publicly-owned city land. In the face of the staggering rental housing affordability gap, Philadelphia needs to explore other ways of increasing the supply of housing, beyond the traditional housing production systems of new construction and renovations. This may include evaluating rent control and/or rent stabilization best practices around the country.

8. Record low housing supply has pushed up home prices, closing off the possibility of home ownership to many first-time homebuyers. The median home value in the Philadelphia metropolitan area has reached \$320,000, increasing \$100,000 from 5 years ago. How can we keep neighborhoods affordable and sustainable as Philadelphia sees more growth and development?

In a rising market, first-time home buyers face the dual challenge of upfront cash for downpayment and closing costs and an affordable monthly housing payment that does not exceed 30% of their gross monthly income. For the front-end challenge, I would continue to support and expand housing purchase assistance, such as the City's [Philly First Home](#) which provides a homebuyer assistance grant of up to \$10,000 (or 6% of the home's purchase price, whichever is lower) to assist first-time homebuyers reduce the principal, cover down payment and loan closing costs. For the monthly housing payment affordability, I would explore funding to pay discount points (up to 3% of the loan amount) to reduce the interest rate on loan which would make the monthly housing payment approx.. 10% lower and therefore affordable and reduce chances of early payment defaults.

I would also support legislation and policies that can protect housing from speculative investment, which could include the expansion of community land trusts in speculative real estate markets to conserve for affordable housing production.

Development going forward must be not engage in practices that will result in gentrification. Furthermore, new development should retain the architectural integrity of the neighborhood, be energy efficient and/or with a zero-carbon footprint and hire local residents for projects. The creation of strong Community Benefits Agreements which give real power to community members is also important. And finally, the limitation of the 10-year property tax abatement to only those areas where there is a demonstrated need for development, and not just areas where developers are only concerned about maximizing profits. This last policy has been enabled by state legislation crafted by Representative Jared Solomon with a local bill proposed by Council President Clarke to cover parts of his district and the 8th Council District.

9. Philadelphia faces some serious headwinds from more residents and businesses considering leaving the city for the suburbs, more than at any point in the last two decades. What do you think must happen to ensure the region's economic recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic comes out in urban-Philadelphia's favor?

We need to make this City more attractive to entrepreneurs, with emphasis on understanding particular needs of entrepreneurs of color. These entrepreneurs need easier access to capital from an investment community that understands the value of local entrepreneurial growth and their responsibility to be good corporate citizens. With the exponential expansion of the life sciences industry in our City, these high growth companies could invest in smaller Black and Brown owned enterprises for sourcing products and services and provide services contracts. As someone who got my start in the Lifesciences and who has continued to maintain relationships there, I could take a leadership role in bringing about such connections. Related to this issue is also the problem of overtaxing start-up businesses. While the BIRT exempts the first \$100k of gross receipts from taxation, small start-up businesses could use a larger exemption, particularly since the early years of a business typically go through operating losses and reach profitability after a few years, which is business world is known as a "J" curve. Helping these initial years with higher exemption of gross receipts from BIRT would support the growth and stabilization of these start-ups into mature tax paying businesses.

CLOSING STATEMENT

Tell us more about what you bring to the table as an ally for urbanist politics in City Hall. Why should 5th Square endorse you over other candidates running for your position? What makes you the right person to advance the urbanist movement's goals politically at the local level?

If elected to the Philadelphia City Council, I would be the only scientist serving on that body and as well as the only immigrant –lived experiences that will bring fresh perspectives to being a public servant. As the only Muslim woman and a women's advocate with a proven track record of using an intersectional lens, I will fight bigotry and dismantle racist and sexist infrastructure that impedes access selectively. I will use a data-driven approach (like that of 5th Square) to bring about systemic change and institute robust public engagement with Philadelphians to listen, learn and share. But beyond that I bring a compelling personal story which I believe will stand me in good stead to be a strong and compassionate legislator for all of the City's residents.