

Candidate: Layla Law-Gisiko

Office: NYC Council District 3

Question: Please provide a brief statement about why you are running for this office. What would be your #1 policy priority if elected? And please provide one accomplishment that you believe illustrates why you're the best candidate for the job.

Candidate Response:

I am running for City Council because New York works best when it is governed with rigor, integrity, and respect for the people who call it home.

I am an immigrant, a mother, and a journalist. For more than two decades, I have been a hands-on community advocate in Chelsea, the West Village, and Hell's Kitchen. I did not come to public life through political patronage. I came through civic work: organizing public forums, challenging opaque development deals, reading environmental impact statements line by line, and standing with tenants who were told they had no power.

As President of The City Club of New York, I have led citywide efforts on housing, land use, transportation, and democratic accountability, from Penn Station to the Brooklyn Marine Terminal. As District Leader for AD75/A, I help run elections and safeguard the integrity of our local democratic process. On Election Day, I am at poll sites, not at fundraisers.

Housing: A Non-Market Vision

The housing crisis will not be solved by speculative development that produces marginal affordability. We need a structural shift toward non-market housing.

My agenda prioritizes stabilizing NYCHA, preserving and strengthening Mitchell-Lama, expanding limited-equity cooperatives, supporting community land trusts, and building 100% permanently affordable housing on public land. Public land must remain a public asset. Permanently affordable housing, not luxury cross-subsidy, must be the priority.

I oppose demolition of NYCHA housing in Chelsea and support a repair-first approach that protects residents and preserves deeply affordable homes.

Democratic Accountability

Community engagement must be early, transparent, and substantive. I served 19 years on Community Board 5, including as Chair of the Land Use Committee, reviewing rezonings and major development proposals.

I have convened public forums bringing experts, elected officials, and residents together for real debate on infrastructure, housing, and public finance. Government must govern in the public interest, not for insiders.

Climate and Infrastructure

Land use must align with sustainability: building near transit, reducing emissions, protecting flood-prone areas, and investing in green retrofits and resilient infrastructure.

Education and Families

We must invest in children at every stage, from early childcare through college, by expanding affordable childcare, fully funding public schools, reducing class sizes, strengthening mental health and after-school programs, and investing in CUNY.

The Tony Dapolito Recreation Center

The Tony Dapolito Recreation Center is a historic civic anchor. I support restoring and reopening it with urgency and transparency.

I am running to bring disciplined, principled, and highly competent leadership to the City Council: leadership that protects public assets, expands permanently affordable housing, strengthens democratic institutions, restores community anchors, and governs for residents, not special interests. New York deserves nothing less.