



2025 City Council Candidates Survey General Election

The Tenants Association compiled a list of questions that we thought were important to our community and sent them to the six Democrats in the June 2025 primary vying to represent us in the City Council. The primary was won by Virginia Maloney.

At the same time, we sent the survey to independent candidate Kyle Athayde, who was not in the primary.

A Republican candidate, Debra Schwartzben, has been [reported to no longer be actively campaigning](#). The NYC Campaign Finance Board in its General Election Voter Guide (mailed early October) noted that she "did not submit a complete profile in time for inclusion in this printed Voter Guide." The Manhattan Republican Party's [website](#) lists her as a candidate but has no further information. Her name remains on the ballot.

Attached are the responses from Virginia Maloney and Kyle Athayde.

TA notes appear in square brackets.

2025 CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES SURVEY—GENERAL ELECTION

The candidates are Virginia Maloney (Democrat) and Kyle Athayde (Revive East Side).

CANDIDATE DETAILS

	Virginia Maloney	Kyle Athayde
Rent or own?	Rent	Rent
Do you own any multifamily properties?	No	No
How long have you lived in CD4?	My entire life	I am a born and raised East Sider. Through inclusionary housing, I have been able to call CD4 home for the last 25 years.

Social media

Virginia Maloney: <https://www.virginiamaloney.com> <https://www.facebook.com/people/Virginia-Maloney/61567175322607/> <https://x.com/vmmaloney> <https://www.instagram.com/virginiamaloneynyc> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D8MxuosaLGg>

Kyle Athayde: www.kyle2025.com, [@kyleheartnyc](https://www.instagram.com/kyleheartnyc)

Who has endorsed you? [In the primary, with ranked choice voting, an individual or organization could endorse more than one candidate.]

Athayde: New York Immigration Coalition, Forward Party.

Maloney: Labor Unions: 32BJ SEIU; Hotel and Gaming Trades Council; CWA District 1; United Federation of Teachers; The United Fire Officers Association; Uniformed Firefighters Association; Uniformed Sanitationmen's Association; National Association of Letter Carriers, Local 1889; New York City District Council of Carpenters.

Organizations: Stonewall Democratic Club of NYC; Eleanor Roosevelt Independent Democrats; The New Majority, #1 Rank; The 504 Democratic Club; New York League of Conservation Voters; National Organization for Women New York City; Eleanor's Legacy; Feminist Majority; Run for Something.

People: Carolyn B. Maloney, Former Member of Congress; Nydia Velazquez, Member of Congress; Christine Quinn, Former City Council Speaker; Gifford Miller, Former City Council Speaker; C. Virginia Fields, Former Manhattan Borough President; Ben Kallos, Former New York City Council Member, District 5, Former White House Official, Biden Administration; Pete Grannis, NYS Deputy Comptroller, Former New York State Assemblymember, Former Commissioner New York State Department of Environmental Conservation*; Dick Gottfried, Former New York State Assemblymember; Reshma Patel, District Leader, 74th AD, Eleanor Roosevelt Independent Democrats, Member, Manhattan Community Board 6, Former NYC Comptroller Candidate; Mike Corbett, District Leader, 74th AD Part D, Eleanor Roosevelt Independent Democrats; Eric Gertler, Former Executive Vice President of the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC); Eleanor Smeal, Women's Rights Activist, President and Co-founder of the Feminist Majority, Former President of NOW; Brice Peyre, Former President of the Stonewall Democratic Club of New York City, Longtime member of Carnegie Hill Neighbors*, CIVITAS*, and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts*; Leonard Lubinsky, Member, Four Freedoms Democratic Club, Author of Len's Political Notes and Letters; Molly Hollister, WSP USA, VP Communications and Public Involvement, NY Lead; VP, Eleanor Roosevelt Independent Democrats; Arnold Segarra, Community Organizer; Mike Schweinsburg, President, 504 Democrats; Nicole Veno, Executive Committee Member, Lexington Democratic Club; Member NYJL*, Attorney; Anne Marie Principe, 9/11 Survivor and Healthcare Advocate; Taina Borrero, Member and Co-Chair of the Youth, Education & Libraries Committee, Manhattan Community Board 8*, Executive Committee Member, Lexington Democratic Club, Board Member, ERA Coalition*; Anne Levack, Member, Eleanor Roosevelt Independent Democrats; Elisabeth Hutton, Community Activist, Parks and Public Spaces Committee Interim Chair, Community Board 5*; Frank Wilkinson, Former District Leader, Former President & Vice President of Four Freedoms Democratic Club.

Non-endorsement Candidate Ratings: Planned Parenthood Action Fund, 100% Rating; Moms Demand Action, Gun Sense Candidate.

What do you see as the most important issues facing STPCV?

Maloney: Preserving affordability for tenants, holding management accountable, and improving quality of life in the surrounding streets.

Athayde: Serving on Manhattan Community Board 6 for 10 years, and elected 3x as its Chair until term-limited last year, I have a deep understanding of the historical and current needs of STPCV.

In speaking with residents, the most important issues concerning them are rent stabilization/tenant protections and empowerment, public safety/quality of life, and transportation infrastructure. Additionally, the closure of MSBI has led to loss of much needed community-based health services.

I am specifically concerned about the development of the SPARC site—how it will impact transportation services, whether or not an influx of people will create overcrowding in the neighborhood, and how a new ecosystem across the street will impact the day-to-day lives of STPCV residents. Any development must be responsible development in partnership with the local community. As your City Councilmember, I will ensure that the City is accountable to STPCV and surrounding communities in building out a SPARC site that is shaped for us and by us.

HOUSING

The U.S. Supreme Court has been asked to consider a case from California landlords that may ultimately serve to weaken rent regulations nationwide (<https://shelterforce.org/2025/05/07/supreme-court-considers-landlord-appeal-that-could-overturn-tenant-protections/>).

Do you support strengthening Albany’s laws—and by extension the city’s—to protect rent regulations, strengthen existing laws, and close loopholes?

KA	VM
Yes	Yes

What changes would you like to see to housing laws? What housing initiatives do you support? Please provide a more nuanced answer than “build more.”

Athayde: For too many New Yorkers, rent eats up too much of their paycheck, homeownership feels like a foolish dream, and displacement is an ever-present threat. As the only candidate in this race who has been homeless, I am all too familiar with failing housing policies.

My EAST Plan includes: universal rent cap, increasing middle-income housing options that expand rent-regulated units targeted at household earning up to 165% of AMI, a Green Tape Initiative to streamline approvals for developments depending on the amount of affordable housing to be built, a universal right to counsel so that tenants are not alone in

housing court, require that all new developments reserve at least 45% for low- and middle-income tenants, and bar slumlords from being able to purchase or operate property for renters.

Maloney: We do need more housing stock to address the housing affordability crisis, and I will work to modernize zoning laws to allow for more housing along avenues and convert underused commercial properties in Midtown East into mixed-income housing.

I will be a strong advocate for strengthening tenant protections by closing loopholes, expanding Right to Counsel, and investing in public education campaigns so tenants know their rights before they're at risk of eviction.

For our senior population, the income limit for SCRIE needs to be raised and indexed to inflation and Social Security COLA adjustments.

The mayor's Rent Guidelines Board has voted this year to raise rents substantially again despite their own data that shows owners' NOI (net operating income) increased 12.1%. Would you be in favor of a rent freeze or even a rollback?

VM	KA
I believe any rent increases for rent-stabilized apartments should be as low as possible and appropriate for the income of renters. They are sometimes needed to insure that buildings are well maintained for the tenants.	I am in favor of an IMMEDIATE RENT FREEZE and then fighting for a long-term solution to cap rent increases for low- to middle-income housing.

[At the June 2 primary candidate forum at Waterside, Virginia Maloney did not raise her hand when the candidates were asked if they were in favor of a rent freeze.]

Have you ever testified before the RGB? If so, when?

VM	KA
No	No

Would you travel to Albany to support tenant efforts to get better housing laws?

VM	KA
Yes	Yes

Have you done so in the past?

VM	KA
No	No

Would you be in favor of reforming the RGB: who appoints it, number of members, member eligibility.

Maloney: We need a reformed the RGB that is more transparent and independent of mayoral control.

Athayde: Yes. The Rent Guidelines Board should be appointed by the New York City Council, not the Mayor. As your City Councilmember, I will lead the charge to reduce the number of RGB members from the current 9 members down to 7 members, allow tenants and tenant advocates more opportunity to become public members, change the way data is collected and used to make rent adjustment determinations, and change the time of year the board makes those determinations.

Do you support an increase in the SCRIE/DRIE income threshold?

KA	VM
Yes	Yes

PUBLIC SAFETY AND NOISE

The recent helicopter crash in the Hudson River spotlighted the noise and danger from the many unnecessary flights over Manhattan. Seaplane traffic on the heavily used East River and elsewhere is unregulated.

At his recent STPCV town hall, Congressman Jerry Nadler referred to the skies over Manhattan as the Wild West. What is your position on “stop the chop”—banning unnecessary helicopter flights over Manhattan? What about seaplanes?

Maloney: I support Stop the Chop. Nonessential helicopter and seaplane flights are not only dangerous but also disruptive to quality of life. We need federal, state, and city coordination to restrict these flights and hold private tour operators accountable. I am fully aware of the vast complexity of issues surrounding FAA regulation of helicopter traffic, my mother wrote and introduced the original federal legislation to ban nonessential helicopter traffic over New York City during her time in Congress.

Athayde: In the district with the least amount of green space in Manhattan, and one of the lowest in all of NYC, the East River and our waterfront are sacred green spaces for CD4 residents. It should not be polluted by noise and danger from helicopters and seaplanes. As your City Councilmember I will ensure that all unnecessary helicopter and plane flights are banned over Manhattan.

Although the locations are not in CD4, the situation on the south side of 14th St. between First Ave. and Avenue A and the west side of First Ave. between 14th and 15th Sts.—drug dealing, selling stolen goods, sidewalk and bus stop obstruction—affect STPCV residents.

After years of residents complaining to two precincts and two City Council members, it took a murder to get the mayor's attention. What would you do to improve conditions just across from us, and how would you work with your City Council colleague from CD2 and the 9th Precinct?

Athayde: As the Chair of Manhattan Community Board 6, I led to resolve this issue when it first began several years ago. My approach then will be my approach as your City Councilmember: Speak first with constituents and communicate directly that we are aware of the situation and are taking decisive actions to solve it.

I communicated with the STPCV Tenants Association, and directly with residents through NextDoor, e-mail, phone, and in-person discussions. I then brought these conversations directly to our councilmembers.

I then coordinated with both our council members, and various city agencies, including the NYPD, Department of Consumer Protection, and the Department of Transportation. Through local collaboration, we were able to clean up the 14th street corridor while I served as Chair.

Unfortunately, our interventions were not maintained by our city agencies after I was term-limited as Chair, and it led to a tragic and unnecessary death last year. This particular area needs quick decisive action, which I will lead as your Councilmember in partnership with the STPCV Tenants Association, Community Boards 6 and 3, and our local agencies,

which includes regular Neighborhood Safety Patrols to keep our streets, stores, and subways safe. And, to ensure that these measures remain, as Councilmember, I will provide stringent oversight in partnership with the District 2 Councilmember.

Maloney: I will build on and expand the work of Councilmember Powers with the 14th Street Community Improvement Coalition, ensure funding for more NYPD officers to walk the beat, expand street outreach services to individuals experiencing street homelessness and substance abuse, and hold City agencies including NYPD, DSNY, DHS accountable for delivering tangible results.

E-bikes, e-scooters, and bicycles are perceived by some as a menace because they don't always stay in the bike lane or obey traffic regulations, and lithium ion batteries have caught fire. Some have proposed licensing e-bikes. What would you support to keep pedestrians, motorists, and e-bike operators safe?

Maloney: E-bike and moped use has surged across the city, but enforcement hasn't kept up. The city should enforce sidewalk riding laws consistently, especially in crowded pedestrian zones, with real-time fines. I will support common sense regulations like Priscilla's Law to require registration and identification for high-speed e-bikes and mopeds used for commercial purposes. These vehicles operate in public space and should be treated accordingly. I will also work to hold the app companies like Uber and Seamless responsible for promoting safe riding by their delivery workers. That means incentivizing safe behavior, training and certifying delivery riders on traffic rules, and sharing violation data to help prevent crashes.

Athayde: I am the only candidate with a comprehensive and innovative solution to the dangers of e-bikes, e-scooters, and bicycles as part of my EAST Plan.

First, I will support current NYC Council legislation to mandate licenses and registration. Second, as part of the Citi Bike contract renegotiation process, I will require that geo-fencing technology be installed throughout the city, so that we can establish NO BIKE ZONES on sidewalks (the batteries will automatically turn off if it crosses a certain zone). Lastly, we will install speed bumps at every light and pedestrian crossing so that bikes do not speed through.

Subways are perceived by many as unsafe. What would you do to make them safer and make riders feel safer?

Athayde: As part of my EAST Plan, I will move the police officers from the platforms and into the cars to combat crime where they currently take place. I will also implement smart surveillance, improved lighting, and 24/7 mental health outreach so that emotionally disturbed people are getting the services they need.

Maloney: I will fight for well-lit stations with visible MTA staff, working security cameras, and greater NYPD presence on platforms and trains, especially at night. When I was a kid, I took the subway alone. Now, as an adult, I don't always feel comfortable doing that—and I know I'm not alone. Public safety has to start with how people actually feel in their neighborhoods. That's the standard I'll bring to City Hall.

HEALTH

We just lost Mount Sinai Beth Israel, a mainstay of the area for more than 100 years. The ERs at Bellevue and NYU Langone are overwhelmed. This situation was years in the making, with legislators at the state and local level dropping the ball. What would you do to increase essential health care facilities nearby, especially another fully functioning ER?

Maloney: We need to fast-track a new emergency facility downtown. I'd work to expand 24/7 urgent care centers with ER capabilities as an stop-gap measure, while pushing for the creation of a new hospital.

Athayde: For the past few years, I have been part of the community activism to keep MSBI open, and to maintain health services in the neighborhood. As Councilmember, I will continue to support these efforts. Additionally, I am the only candidate with the bold idea to use EMINENT DOMAIN to preserve the closed-down MSBI site as a health facility through the NYC Health + Hospitals system.

New York Eye and Ear, a historic institution, is also under threat. Thoughts?

Athayde: NYC Council should be demanding transparency and healthy fiscal practices by private hospitals. As the only candidate with hospital administration experience, I will provide greater oversight over such facilities as your local City

Councilmember, and will ensure greater accountability with the hospital operators, NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene, and the NYS Department of Health.

Specifically with NYEEL, we need to ensure that MSBI maintains responsibility, and provides a community-based plan to continue services without disruption if they choose to cease operations. As your City Councilmember, I will simultaneously negotiate with other private hospital operators (such as Northwell), who want to expand their services, so that constituents are not deserted.

Maloney: New York Eye and Ear is essential specialty care facility. I would fight to require public notice and review for all hospital consolidations. I am actively working with advocates including the 504 Democratic Club to ensure that New York Eye and Ear remains an important community health facility in this neighborhood.

EDUCATION

Do we have enough public schools—3-K through high school—to serve CD4? If not, how would you add schools?

Maloney: No, we have uneven seat capacity. Some parts of the district are underserved. I will work with the School Construction Authority on a data driven plan to identify need and fast-track new sites. Across this district we also have too few 3K and pre-K seats proving that these programs are not yet “universal.”

Athayde: While District 4 has several strong public schools, we struggle with overcrowding in elementary schools and limited access to 3-K and Pre-K seats, especially for families not zoned for top-performing schools. Middle and high school seats are more evenly distributed, but there are persistent inequities in admissions, and many students must travel outside their immediate neighborhoods for appropriate options. To address these concerns, we need to: Add more 3K and PreK seats by converting underused spaces into classrooms; Advocate for the School Construction Authority to fund new elementary schools and expand existing ones in high-demand zones; Utilize NYC’s stock of underutilized commercial and office space for educational use through rezoning and private-public partnerships; Build stronger relationships with Community Education Councils to assess needs in real time, and to push for more accountability from the DOE and SCA; Be more systematic in admissions so that students do not need to leave their neighborhood to access a quality education.

Since space is limited at the city’s most academically rigorous high schools, would you be in favor of creating another Stuyvesant, Bronx Science, or Brooklyn Tech?

VM	KA
Yes	All NYC public high schools should have the same standards, academic rigor, opportunities, and quality as the specialized high schools. Academic success should not be limited to a certain number of students in limited seats. I am highly supportive of creating additional specialized high schools, and have set an ambitious goal of ensuring that every city council district hosts at least 1 specialized high school.

TRANSPORTATION

The city’s congestion pricing plan has no carve-out for residents of what it calls the Central Business District, yet many car owners in our area go from the garage or street to the FDR without adding to the traffic on our streets. What relief would you offer residents of the “zone”?

Athayde: Congestion Pricing has led to revenue and decreased traffic, but is a prime example of the dysfunction of government that operates from the top down without nuance or input from the local community. Congestion pricing MUST INCLUDE EXEMPTIONS FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS who live within the zone, especially those who pay for a garage. Policies should not be indiscriminately punitive, they should better the lives of all constituents.

Maloney: I support congestion pricing and think the best way to defend the congestion pricing program is to work with local communities in and near the zone to address any of the edge cases that are regularly used to criticize the program. This includes addressing issues around parking on the Upper East Side, where commuters are driving to the neighborhood, parking, and then using mass transit into the zone. These edge cases are why continuing community engagement is such an important part of implementing a large scale initiative like the congestion pricing program.

More broadly, we need to be keeping a close eye on the data to see if policies or street routing needs to be modified to correct for any unintended, negative changes to traffic patterns.

Public transportation in our area is crowded and may not run frequently enough, e.g., the First and Second Avenue buses, the 14th and 23rd St. crosstowns, and the L train. Public transportation will be under greater pressure when SPARC is completed. What would you do to improve service?

Maloney: I will work to increase the reliability, frequency, and speed of crosstown and 1st/2nd Avenue SBS bus service. Additionally, I will be a strong proponent of advancing Phase 3 of Second Avenue Subway construction connection which will bring the line down to 14th St.

Athayde: As part of my EAST Plan, as City Councilmember, I will fight for city-control of the MTA's buses and subway system, create major open busways on every major street, implement automated-train control technology in our district, and expand the ferry system to include more stops in the district and fully integrate it with the OMNY system. We also need to expand the Fair Fares program so that students and seniors can access our public transportation system.

As the Chair of Manhattan Community Board 6, I successfully advocated for the creation of the SPARC Kips Bay Community Task Force, which is led by the Councilmember in partnership with the community board and the STPCV and Waterside Tenants Associations. I will harness this task force to demand that the SPARC development also include funds to improve transportation in the area, including contributing to the 2nd Avenue Subway as well as expanded bus lanes along First Avenue.

SMALL BUSINESSES

What would you do to help small businesses to survive?

Maloney: I will push for stronger protections against sudden rent spikes and unfair lease practices, explore vacancy fees, streamline permitting and reduce bureaucratic hurdles for small businesses, and work with the NYPD and Manhattan DA to focus on organized retail theft and the networks that profit from it, including the resale markets.

Athayde: As part of my EAST Plan, I will achieve Small Business Rent Relief, create a One-Stop-Digital Licensing Portal, implement Automatic License Renewals for small businesses in good standing, and establish a Corporate Accountability Fee for large chains that exceed a certain revenue that is contributed to a Small Business Resilience Fund.

BEAM LIVING/BLACKSTONE

The TA is vigilant about actions taken by Beam Living because they do not always abide by regulations or the actions may adversely affect tenants. We have regularly enlisted the assistance of our elected representatives, such as supporting us in getting management to dismantle one combined heat and power plant on the property and not build a second, larger one.

Would you be willing to maintain close contact with the TA and meet with us as necessary and requested?

VM	KA
Yes	Yes

Would you be willing to deal directly with Beam and Blackstone at the request of the Tenants Association?

VM	KA
Yes	Yes

ADDITIONAL STATEMENT

Is there anything else you'd like us to know about your positions and plans?

Athayde: The East Side is my home. I was born in Metropolitan Hospital, attended daycare at the Vanderbilt YMCA, went to school at P.S. 183 and M.S. 104, and graduated from CUNY Hunter College. At the age of 8, my family was homeless, and through inclusionary housing, we were able to call District 4 home.

I am the working-class candidate: a first-generation American, who has lived in this neighborhood my entire life—not as a politician, but as a neighbor who knows what it is like to struggle and fight for a better future.

I am running to get the politics out of politics—to focus on the local issues that affect our day to day lives. My EAST Plan focuses on Education, Affordability, Safety and Sanitation, and Transportation, all of which affect our day to day lives, and require solutions immune to political parties and partisanship.

I believe that voters deserve a viable alternative to one-party rule, and that I am best positioned to Revive the East Side through my professional and personal experience, battled-tested community leadership, and innovative ideas.

Maloney: I'm running for City Council to fight for a city that's safer, and more affordable; and for more accountability in our local government. I bring real world experience in both the private and public sectors and will focus on the issues that make a very real impact on New Yorkers daily lives. From fighting for a more affordable City to increasing accessibility on our subway platforms and our web platforms, I will seek out pragmatic solutions to make it just a little easier to live in the best City on Earth.

#