

49 IDEAS FOR THE 49TH



MIKE DEMOCRATIC
PRIMARY JUNE 22, 2021
SCHNALL
for **CITY COUNCIL**
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www.mikeschnall.com



“My ideas are designed to be pragmatic solutions to common everyday problems. Whether it’s as simple as providing our bus riding population with more seating, or keeping our seniors and their pets together, or providing free wifi in all five boroughs, these ideas are achievable and make life in the 49th district better. I want people to be proud to live on the north shore, proud of being a Staten Islander, and my work should always be focused on making our borough a better place to live, work and play.” – Mike Schnall

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QUALITY OF LIFE IMPROVEMENTS

- 1. Commit funding for litter removal along commercial corridors and in residential neighborhoods:** Our neighborhoods are suffering from an overflow of litter. As Council Member, I will work with DSNY to purchase mechanized, electric cleaning trucks for the cleaning of curbs, tree pits, and sidewalks along business corridors and residential neighborhoods.
- 2. Restore litter basket services, increase litter basket pickup, and allow the NYC Council to purchase litter and recycling baskets:** Littering should never be easy to do, and if the City provides an adequate number of litter baskets in our neighborhoods, no one should have to litter. As Council Member, I will push to restore placement of additional litter baskets in residential areas and increase the pickup of litter baskets, and commit funding for additional litter and recycling baskets in hard-hit neighborhoods.
- 3. Enhanced graffiti removal:** My Council office will fund a qualified non-profit to create part-time jobs for graffiti removal, and conduct on-the-spot graffiti removal whenever requested.
- 4. Safer and accessible sidewalks:** My Council office will ensure the City is repairing, replacing and installing sidewalks wherever necessary to improve pedestrian access and ADA accessibility in all our neighborhoods.
- 5. Enhanced Trees & Sidewalks repairs:** The list of cracked sidewalks due to street trees keeps growing, and the backlog of tree stump removal is endless. Working with NYC Parks, my office will allocate funding to expedite the repair and replacement of sidewalks damaged by streets trees, and the removal of tree stumps.



SMALL BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY

6. **Tax amnesty for small businesses:** The City and State should provide tax amnesty for 2020 and 2021 taxes and fees of all types on small businesses.
7. **Subsidize rent and utility costs for small businesses:** The City and State should reimburse rent and utility costs for businesses shuttered due to the rolling COVID-19 mandated closures.
8. **Add a Commercial kitchen and hospitality incubator:** Working with our north shore BIDs and merchant associations, my office will work to establish a commercial kitchen and hospitality incubator on the north shore for training, and for use by local food trucks, as well as for other local food-related industries.
9. **Mortgage pause for commercial properties:** The City should enforce the Federal guidelines for placing mortgages on pause for struggling building and business owners. Commercial property owners deserve a break on their mortgages too, which helps tenants and small businesses.
10. **Halt all punitive fines and fees:** The City should immediately halt all unnecessary and seemingly punitive inspections and investigations from enforcement agencies on our hospitality industry.
11. **Create pathways for procurement:** Smaller local businesses need to be competitive for City contracts, and the current procurement landscape doesn't allow small, less capitalized businesses to have access to or compete for City contracts. Much like the pathways established for M/WBE businesses, the City should create pathways for small, locally-owned businesses across all procurement platforms.



LAND USE, DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE & HOUSING

- 12. Public benefits and infrastructure first:** Any development on City-owned property will be required to build public benefits and infrastructure first, before any pilings or foundations goes into the ground.
- 13. Infrastructure contributions:** The City must require either financial contributions be made in ratio to the size and scope of a development to accommodate for current and future expansion of infrastructure, or require the build out of infrastructure in advance of any construction.
- 14. Zombie home restoration project:** We need to create an innovative new program on Staten Island to tackle zombie home issues. I will push to establish a pilot program on the north shore that'll give a City entity the authorization to work with City and State agencies to get these homes on the market, and allow low income Staten Islanders to have first access to purchasing these rescued houses. And in the rehabilitation of these properties, we should involve non-profits like Habitat for Humanity to help restore these homes.
- 15. Return sidewalk liability to the City:** I will work to return liability for sidewalks to the City. Making homeowners and commercial storefronts liable for sidewalks was done as tort reform by Mayor Bloomberg, saddling homeowners and business owners with unaffordable fines and requirements from DOT to replace sidewalks. The enforcement is punitive, and the City has the resources to do all repairs and installations.
- 16. Red flag development near parkland:** The City's mapped parkland is protected by law, and City Planning must red flag, and alert NYC Parks, to any development proposed next to parkland. NYC Parks must be brought into the discussion, with approved and mandated mitigation measures required of the developer/homeowner prior to construction.



TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENTS



- 17. Enhancements at traffic intersections:** I will work with NYC DOT to enhance our intersection in three ways: clarify left turning lanes for drivers by providing more ground marking; establish left-turn lights wherever possible; and install more right-on-red turns.
- 18. Rethink speed cameras to ensure effectiveness around schools:** The de Blasio administration has intentionally located speed cameras in wrong places, in violation of New York State law. My office will catalog all speed cameras, evaluate their adherence to NYS law, and make recommendations for the reorientation of cameras to be more impactful around schools and not purely for revenue generation.
- 19. Increase ferry speed and frequency during rush hour:** I will work with the next Mayoral administration to add increased rush hour ferry boat frequency by adding 9:15AM and 9:45AM Staten Island ferry boats. And, I will advocate for the speeding up of the ferry boats to decrease the current 25 minute travel time.



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION



- 20. Install benches at bus stops:** My office will request the MTA install more street furniture benches at bus stops across the 49th district. If we expect bus riders to wait forever for a bus to arrive, at least give them somewhere to sit.
- 21. Late night bus service:** Manhattan, Bronx and Brooklyn have late night bus service, Staten Island does not. We have 5,000 people working at the Amazon logistics center in Bloomfield using the S46, and we have two hospitals with graveyard shifts. We need late night bus services to help late night workers get to and from work.
- 22. Keep cash as an option for bus and subway fares:** Many communities don't have access to credit cards or up-to-date cell phone technology, and with the phase out of the MetroCard and sole reliance on OMNI, many residents will not be able to use public transportation. The MTA needs to continue to accept cash on buses and in the subways.



SCHOOLS & EDUCATION



23. Baseline funding for Music, Art, and Dance: I will work with the NYC Department of Education to baseline funding for Music, Art and Dance, and make the moving of that funding beyond the control of individual principals. The funding will go to hire staff and required cultural education. All too often funding for arts education is moved to fund other priorities, and we need to put a high value on arts, music and dance.

24. Increase Career & Technical Education (CTE): I will work with local principals and the NYC Department of Education to increase the implementation of CTE programs.

25. Reintroduce trades programs in our high schools: Working with labor unions, I will push for the re-introduction of trades programs in high schools, with an emphasis on new green trades.

26. High school service requirements: I will work with the NYC Department of Education to require graduating seniors to spend the last three months of high school doing community service projects. They'll gain a greater appreciation for the needs of their community, and give them exposure to some real-work experiences and marketable skills.

27. Increase ADA access in all schools: I will introduce legislation requiring elevators and ADA accessibility in all schools on the north shore with in a four-year time period.



CRIMINAL JUSTICE



28. Create telecourt options: Create court access via computer in NYCHA housing and libraries. Identify a room that can provide the necessary safety, security and privacy for people needing to attend court, to use Zoom or other telecom technology to attend court without having to travel. Many government services should always seek to “bring it to the people” and not expect people to navigate our severely deficient public transportation network.

29. Rikers Island guarantee: I will introduce legislation preventing a fifth community jail on Staten Island. Staten Islanders need assurances that the next Mayoral administration won't be able to backtrack and decide to build a new jail in our borough. Legislation will make the decision permanent.



ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY, AND RESILIENCE



30. Increase the north shore's tree canopy: Trees provide invaluable benefits like shade, carbon capture, clean air and beauty. I will work with NYC Parks to increase tree canopy along our commercial corridors, and prioritize plantings in parks and on private properties.

31. Restart the North Shore Bluebelt project: Restart discussions with NYC Department of Environmental Protection about using existing parks and green spaces on the north shore to establish a cohesive bluebelt to absorb increasing flooding from climate change and extreme weather.



COVID-19

32. Establish a COVID-19 Memorial: I will call for a COVID-19 memorial in a Staten Island park, to commemorate those that died due to the virus, and also commemorate our front line heroes.



PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

33. Transform schoolyards to community playgrounds: Commit to funding new schoolyard to playground conversions, to create community-centric open spaces for use by the community after school and on weekends.

34. Baseline NYC Parks' funding: The City must commit to at least 1% of its budget providing for the care and maintenance of parks across the five boroughs. Parks are a necessity for healthy living, and should be treated as essential infrastructure.

35. Capital funding transparency destroys competitive bidding: Private industry contractors bidding on NYC Parks capital projects know exactly how much money is in the budget before they bid, leading to inflated prices and collusion. If the City Council were to remove line itemed budget numbers from Parks capital projects and lump each borough's total capital allocation under one budget line, it would force private contractors to bid more competitively, and price projects based on the current market costs.

36. Require expense funding for the care and maintenance of parks be tied to new capital funding: When a new park or playground is opened, they look perfect. After those parks are opened however, the local Parks staff are forced to do more with less, using existing resources to cover more park space. The City should tie expense funding to capital projects, to ensure newly constructed parks and playgrounds receive the appropriate amount of care to keep new construction clean and green.

37. Give NYC Parks its own capital budget: NYC Parks are reliant on the goodwill of elected officials to allocate capital funding for park projects, which is often determined by politics and not need. Allow NYC Parks to maintain their own capital projects which will supplement allocations by elected officials, to address properties with the most urgent need.

38. Allow NYC Parks to keep its concession revenue: Allow NYC Parks to keep concession revenue within the agency's budget, rather than that revenue going into the City's general fund. This way, the agency has more incentive to fully build out a robust and user-friendly array of concessions in parks across the five boroughs.



HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH



39. More healthcare services: For many years, Staten Islanders have been clamoring for a public hospital. Building a third hospital will inevitably force the closure of one of our two non-profit hospitals, leaving us again with just two hospitals. Instead, I will work with Health + Hospitals to provide telemedicine, in-home doctor visits and mobile medical vans, to make sure Staten Island gets all the services of a public hospital.

40. More mental health access across our borough and in our schools: Staten Island has too few psychiatric beds across the entire borough. We need to increase access to mental health care, and it needs to be distributed across the entire borough. And, I will work to baseline funding for a mental health professional in every intermediate school and high school.



FOOD INSECURITY



41. Expand GrowNYC Youth Markets: My office will work with GrowNYC to bring Youth Markets, – that serve fresh food, to much-needed underserved areas at the street corner level. These Youth Markets teach high school students how to run a small business and give them invaluable life skills not taught in the classroom.

42. Increase food access through development: The City should require all new development to include ground floor spaces suitable and set-aside for supermarkets. My Council office will work with developers to attract new supermarkets to all corners of the district, to reduce food deserts across the district.



SANITATION

43. Expand organics recycling: DSNY piloted a residential organics collection program in the 10303 zip code and then it halted during the pandemic. DSNY will restart it, and should expand it into more zip codes on the north shore.



DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN OUR NON-PROFIT SECTOR



44. Non-profit board diversity: The non-profit sector is one of the largest employers across New York City. It is very important that our non-profit institutions and their missions are as diverse as the communities they serve. Very often our Staten Island non-profits have the same 15-20 people serving on boards and our non-profit boards should better reflect the diversity of the north shore. My Council office can serve as a clearinghouse to collect resumes for potential board members that non-profits can pursue for their board recruitment efforts, in furtherance of their diversity, equity, and inclusion work.

GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION



45. Establish a fourth Community Board:

In the other boroughs, community board borders by and large follow the boundaries of NYPD precincts. The 121 precinct was established in 2013, and the City must add a fourth community board to the north shore to align with our four police precincts.



ANIMAL WELFARE AND WILDLIFE PROTECTION



46. Establish a north shore Animal Care & Control (ACC) satellite office:

The current Animal Care & Control office located on the south shore is insufficient to serve our entire island. I will work to establish a satellite ACC facility on the north shore.

47. Keep seniors and pets together:

My office will support organizations providing pet care for senior owners, and commit to introducing legislation that requires landlords and building owners to allow pets to remain with senior tenants.

48. Provide access to public transportation for therapy animals:

Service animals are provided access to public transportation by the federal ADA, but therapy animals do not have the same access. Since therapy animals provide an important public benefit, I will work with the City to consider a licensing program to allow therapy animals to have access to public transportation.



TECHNOLOGY EQUITY

49. Free wifi across the five boroughs:

I will work with the City to enforce existing franchise and concession agreements to make sure all fiber is laid and wifi nodes installed in City buildings and public parks.



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“Staten Island needs a fighter who will protect our quality of life and get us the much-needed resources and attention from City Hall that we deserve. I’ve worked to improve Staten Island my entire career and I’ll show up at City Hall on day one ready to make an impact.”

- Democrat Mike Schnall

DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY JUNE 22ND, 2021

EARLY VOTING June 12th through June 20th

PROUDLY ENDORSED BY:



www.mikeschnall.com
(917) 426-4312
mike@mikeschnall.com



f MikeSchnallforCityCouncil
t mikeschnall
i mikeschnall

PAID FOR BY MIKE SCHNALL FOR CITY COUNCIL