



Connect with your Neighbors.....Change the World

2023 District Councilmember Questionnaire

Prepared by: Jamie Gauthier

Email: jamie@jamieforwestphilly.com

Campaign Manager: Matt Goldfine (interim)

Phone/Email: 267-428-6288 cm@jamieforwestphilly.com

Committee Name: Jamie For West Philly

Campaign Address: PO Box 38777, Philadelphia, PA 19104

Campaign Email: info@jamieforwestphilly.com

Website: jamieforwestphilly.com

CANDIDATE CERTIFICATION

Candidate Name: Jamie Gauthier

District: 3rd Councilmanic District

I have read the attached questionnaire responses and certify that the information provided is accurate and the opinions stated accurately reflect my own positions.

Candidate Signature: *J Gauthier*

Date: January 14, 2023

District: 3rd Councilmanic District

Please complete the form inserting lines as needed to accommodate your answers,

then sign and return the form via email in Word format to:

info@phillynn.org and Gloria Gilman, gmgilman@gmail.com. Mail a copy with the signature page to

Gloria Gilman

121 S. Broad St., Suite 1710

Philadelphia, PA 19107

I. INTRODUCTION

In Section IV below, please answer as best you can. If you have not yet come to a final decision on an issue, or don't currently have enough information to provide an informed answer, please so state.

II. BACKGROUND

1. Tell us about your experience in leadership and administration. What policy issues have you worked on, and in what capacity? (Please provide the names of two or three individuals who can provide information about your previous work.)

I was elected to City Council in 2019, and have served since January 2020. Over the past three years, I have focused most heavily on housing, gun violence, and equitable land use. I have been the lead sponsor on multiple bills relating to these issues, and have been a leading voice in calling on the Mayor to pursue an emergency response to gun violence.

My work in council can be validated by Councilmembers Helen Gym and Kendra Brooks, with whom I've worked most often and most successfully.

Prior to council, I led several nonprofit community and economic development organizations, including the Fairmount Park Conservancy and the Sustainable Business Network. And before that, I served as a program officer, funding affordable housing projects at Local Initiatives Support Corporation, or LISC. My work at these organizations can be validated by Joyce Smith, a community leader in East Parkside, Steve Masters, former board chair of the Sustainable Business Network, and Andrew Frishkoff, executive director of LISC, respectively.

2. What differentiates you from other candidates?

I am the only urban planner on city council, and I think that colors the way I see the world and my approach to policy, too. I focus a lot on place and how better places can keep people safe and help them to thrive. Housing has always been the core of this agenda, but within a context of equitable neighborhoods where people at every point of the income spectrum have access to abundant transit, quality public schools, well-maintained public spaces, and family-sustaining jobs. I have continuously also advocated for stronger and more targeted place-based interventions (cleaning, greening, lighting,

blight remediation) on the blocks most crippled by gun violence. And lastly, as a district councilmember, I have used zoning— which shapes places and communities— in creative ways to protect and create more affordable housing.

3. With all the money that's being raised by other candidates, what's your path to victory in a crowded field?

I have been and will continue to work hard on fundraising. I ended 2022 having raised \$200,000, and with around \$180,000 on hand. I aim to raise significantly more over this primary season through a mix of call time, house parties and larger fundraisers, and support from larger institutional donors like the building trades and service unions. Compared to my first campaign four years ago, my re-election campaign will have much more institutional support, including the overwhelming majority of the Democratic wards in the district, unions, and advocacy groups.

4. Where do you stand on Term Limits and Councilmanic Prerogative?

I believe in term limits for city council. I do think that it takes time to learn the City and to become effective as a part of a legislative body, so I would advocate for at least 3 terms as the limit.

My positions on prerogative have evolved. Coming into council, I was staunchly against it; however, prerogative has been a way to pass legislation that is important to and supported by a majority of the constituents of the 3rd District, but would not have been supported by all Councilmembers. While some in the past have used prerogative simply to wield power, sometimes it can be a tool to make sure communities' voices are heard to pilot policies in particular neighborhoods.. Mandatory inclusionary zoning passed in the 3rd and 7th districts because of prerogative. I was able to give preference to community land trusts in the city's land disposition process because of prerogative, among other things. The Affordable Housing Preservation Overlay, which covers the UC Townhomes passed due to prerogative.

In assessing prerogative, it is also important to ensure that there is a strong grassroots organizing mechanism that can be deployed by agencies with ultimate decision-making authority. For example, my office has had to intervene many times to ensure that agencies within the administration were carrying out authentic and equitable engagement processes before decisions were made. In one specific case, the admin wanted to advance a major street improvement project based on online surveys completed mostly by younger White residents in a majority Black working-class neighborhood. My office requested that they extend the engagement process and to a much-more in-person one with block meetings, community meetings, and other means designed to engage a more representative sampling of the population.

I would still agree to eliminating prerogative if we could ensure outreach processes conduct real engagement. Community outreach must lift up the voices and perspectives of the residents most often ignored, overlooked, and harmed by government and other actors. Whichever branch of government we vest with land use and community development decisions must do better.

III. PRIORITIES

1. What in your opinion are the greatest challenges facing your district and its residents?

The greatest challenges facing my district are gun violence, affordable housing, and poverty/inequity.

2. What three things would you most want to accomplish to address your district's challenges?

An abundance of safe, quality, accessible housing affordable to people at every range of the income spectrum even in the most desirable, amenity rich areas of the 3rd district.

A meaningful reduction in gun violence (at least 30% or more) in the next two years.

The creation of a robust, at-scale workforce development system that can connect Black/Brown residents to careers in the life sciences.

IV. ISSUES

A. Housing

1. What would you do to change the trajectory of the housing crisis in your district? What agency or program would you start with and why?

On the housing front, I have advanced several policies during my first term in office:

1. The Emergency Housing Protection Act (EHPA): During the pandemic, I created and championed six packaged bills designed to keep renters in their homes during the largest public health crisis in a century. The bills created an eviction moratorium, allowed tenants to get into long-term payment plans for back rent, increased penalties for illegal lockouts, waived late fees, created the City's first eviction diversion program, and proposed a temporary cap on rents (though this bill died in committee). Our joint efforts kept thousands of renters in their homes through COVID. Additionally the Eviction Diversion Program (renewed through 2024) has taken Philadelphia from the fourth highest evicting city in the nation to a national model for eviction prevention.
2. Mixed Income Neighborhood Overlay: In 2021, along with Councilmember Maria Quinones Sanchez, I created and pushed forward the City's first mandatory inclusionary zoning law, which requires at least 20% units in any development (rental or homeownership) be deeply affordable. The City began enforcing this law in July 2022.
3. Affordable Housing Preservation Overlay: AHPOD aims to encourage affordable housing in desirable neighborhoods in West Philadelphia. The overlay includes the University City Townhomes at 40th and Market Streets – which are in danger of being lost to commercial development – along with neighboring locations in the 3rd District where low-income residents could be especially vulnerable to displacement without additional policy interventions. AHPOD implements a 12-month demolition ban on properties in the overlay, while also requiring a significant level of affordable housing in any future development.
4. Public Land for Public Benefit Bill: The Public Land for Public Benefit bill creates a pathway in the 3rd and 4th Councilmanic districts for community-controlled, permanently affordable housing and urban gardens on City-owned land. Community Land Trusts will receive additional scoring on unsolicited applications for City vacant land and can opt into a multi-year lease to allow more time for fundraising and community engagement while getting the land into community stewardship more quickly.
5. People's Preservation Platform (introduced, but not yet passed): The People's Preservation Package:
 - Requires property owners to give notice of their intention to sell their affordable housing property to other affordable housing developers and community groups.

- Requires property owners give other affordable housing providers the opportunity to buy an expiring affordable housing development.
- Authorizes the City of Philadelphia to create a directory of all affordable housing properties in Philadelphia, their funding stream, and when their funding expires.
- Authorizes the Committee on Housing, Neighborhood Development, and the Homeless to conduct hearings regarding discrimination against households holding tenant-based vouchers.

In my next term, I plan to continue my work in this area. My goals will include passing the People's Preservation Package, cracking down on section 8 voucher discrimination, the creation of more affordable homeownership units in my district, continued change to the City's land disposition processes to empower community land trusts, and helping the City to create a more equitable property tax assessment and relief system.

2. How do you plan to help keep long-time homeowners from being forced out of their homes?

Efforts like Council's Neighborhood Preservation Initiative, which I helped to pass, are the type we need to keep residents in their homes. This initiative created \$400M for affordable housing activities over a 4-year period, and put millions into programs like the Basic Systems Repair Program, which offers low-income homeowners grants to make critical repairs to their homes.

I think we have to keep funding home repair programs, so that residents are not displaced because they don't have the money for critical repairs. I also believe we must revamp the way that we assess property taxes, as our current system places an unfair burden on longtime Black/Brown residents. We must continue the City's enormously successful rental assistance program, preserve as many affordable rental units as possible, and assist residents with untangling their titles, so they can fully access resources, programs, and the equity in their homes.

3. Do you support Good Cause and/ or Rent Control legislation? If not, what do you offer as an alternative?

I strongly support both of these measures. In 2020, as chair of the Housing Committee, I brought CM Brooks' emergency COVID rental control measure to a vote (even amidst opposition from several colleagues), and I have played a lead role in discussions to expand Good Cause to all leases in Philadelphia.

4. Would you support legislation to enact zoning requirements to compel inclusion of affordable units in market rate developments, with "affordable" defined as no more than 40 % of the average household income in the ward?

Yes. This is the model I created for mandatory inclusionary zoning along with Councilmember Maria Quinones Sanchez in 2021. Since we passed that, two other council districts have expressed interest in mandatory inclusionary zoning, including Council President Darrell Clarke who recently introduced a similar bill.

5. Would you require the land bank to prioritize the disposition of properties to favor low-income and cooperatively owned developments, including land trusts?

Yes. I have already demonstrated this through the creation and passing of my Public Land for Public Benefit Bill, which gives preference (in the 3rd and 4th councilmanic districts) to community land trusts in the City's disposition process.

B. Education

1. The Phila School District continues to lose public schools. How can we change that?

I think we change that by investing in our public schools and by limiting the growth of charter schools.

2. What do you think of legislation to regulate charter schools? How would you regulate them?

I approve of Governor Wolf's recent move to increase regulations for charter schools, including accounting standards and application processes, and think regulation could go further to insure that there is accountability within the charter system. I would be in support of additional regulations pertaining to the assessment of charter quality, penalties related to any discriminated or 'weeding-out' of differently abled students, and an end to the overfunding of cyber charters.

3. How would you increase community participation in School Board appointments?

First, I think we must ensure that the School Board application process is as accessible as possible. The process should provide opportunity for parents and former students from a variety of district schools to receive appointments, not just those from magnet schools.

Next, I think that community members should have an opportunity to interview nominees.

The most equitable way to ensure community participation in the process is to move to an elected school board, like virtually every other school district in Pennsylvania.

4. Would you compute the cost/benefit ratio for the School District of all proposed Keystone Opportunity Zones (KOZ) before they're approved by Council?

Yes, absolutely. Studies on this program have shown there is little solid proof that matches grandiose promises of job creation and increases in future tax revenues. When this is considered along with the revenue lost to the School District due to this program, it has certainly not offered an adequate return on investment. As proof of my stance, I submitted a letter to the school district asking them to oppose a two-year extension related to a KOZ for a commercial project at 41st and Market, in my district. The developers got the mayor to write a conflicting letter asking the board to vote for the KOZ extension, and the board took his guidance over mine.

C. Criminal Justice

1. How will you reduce gun violence in your district?

1) In September 2020, City Council unanimously signed onto a resolution I authored that called on Mayor Kenney to declare gun violence a citywide emergency. The resolution offered specific guidance on the City's response to this emergency, including greater transparency on the implementation of gun violence initiatives; enhanced coordination and planning among relevant City agencies; leveraging the resources of Philadelphia's private sector, nonprofit community, academic institutions, and healthcare organizations, and more frequent communication with the public about the City's efforts to address this crisis.

The resolution specifically called on the Mayor to:

- Issue an executive order declaring a citywide gun violence emergency, which would include directing the Office of Violence Reduction, the Police Department and other applicable City agencies to implement the Roadmap to Safer Communities with fidelity; elevate their response to this crisis to the level of the City's response to COVID-19; and provide weekly public briefings on the City's efforts to combat the gun violence epidemic, performance goals, inputs and outputs.
- Partner with the City Council to sustainably invest in gun violence reduction efforts over the long-term.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to engage with residents around the creation of safe and healthy communities and expand funding for these efforts.
- Consistently stand with and support community members in public as they confront the gun violence crisis in their neighborhoods.
- Rally corporations, healthcare, and educational institutions to raise funds, increase research and innovation, and supply meaningful jobs to combat the gun violence epidemic.
- More quickly and frequently evaluate the efficacy of the strategies being carried out as part of the Roadmap.
- Improve coordination among City departments towards the goal of reducing gun violence and provide enhanced resources to neighborhoods impacted by gun violence.
- Continue to invest in and implement evidence-based violence reduction efforts, including independent proven violence reduction efforts.
- Work with juvenile probation and parole, the Courts, DHS, and the School District to create a comprehensive intervention program with juveniles involved in, or adjacent to, gun violence.

Mayor Kenney responded to the resolution by saying that declaring a citywide gun violence emergency "is not a solution that will demonstrably change conditions in Philadelphia." His logic is that the resources an emergency declaration would unlock are already being devoted to the gun violence epidemic. I and most of my colleagues disagree.

2) Plan with Rebecca Rhynhart: The former Controller and I publicly called on Mayor Kenney to take specific action in the 14 ZIP codes disproportionately impacted by gun violence, after he refused to declare an emergency.

In addition to better transparency with the public, the action steps detailed in the plan include:

- The Philadelphia Parks and Recreation to immediately and substantially increase programming in the aforementioned ZIP codes;
- The Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services (DBHIDS) and Department of Public Health to coordinate efforts to ensure that all residents in the most affected ZIP codes have access to quality treatment and mental health services;
- The Commerce Department to coordinate with DBHIDS and City partners under the Roadmap to Safer Communities to strategically invest \$5.6 million in additional workforce development funding to reach individuals from the aforementioned ZIP codes involved or at-risk of being involved in gun violence;
- The Managing Director’s Office of Community Services to lead public engagement efforts and mobilize a comprehensive community response, including engaging non-profit and for-profit partners;
- The Managing Director’s Office should formalize a Gun Violence Emergency Response Team to meet daily and develop, implement and measure multi-departmental, place-based strategies to respond to gun violence hot spots. All City departments shall cooperate with the Gun Violence Emergency Response Team. The Gun Violence Emergency Response Team should communicate actions to the public on a weekly basis, detailing the progress on its goals,
- The Managing Director’s Office should work collaboratively with City Council to develop a framework to allocate \$20 million in additional anti-violence funding from the FY22 budget toward programs that use evidence-based strategies, in particular those that employ credible messengers and create access to services for individuals most likely to shoot or be shot, to reduce gun violence; and
- The Managing Director’s Office of Violence Prevention should lead efforts to expand the Community Crisis Intervention Program in the aforementioned ZIP codes and provide a timeline for increasing staff capacity and the number of outreach workers on the ground in these areas.

The effort and corresponding letter ignited a back-and-forth correspondence between myself and the Kenney administration over a two-month period. The administration’s replies were lengthy, but half-hearted. We asked for detailed plans and timelines; in response, the administration defended its work, asserting that every objective we outlined was already underway. And when asked for details, few were provided.

3) Gun Violence Prevention Budget wins: Ahead of finalizing the FY 22 budget, I joined with Councilmembers Gym, Johnson, and Gilmore Richardson to issue a letter to Mayor Kenney informing him of City Council’s attention to dedicate \$100 million to violence prevention and response efforts. 8 additional colleagues supported this effort.

The \$100 million was allocated as follows:

- \$15 million for “prevention”, such as programs like Group Violence Intervention, Community Crisis intervention, and other community-led violence intervention initiatives.
- \$15 million for “healing”, which would go towards mental and behavioral health programs, peer-to-peer support, and other approaches proven to heal our communities.
- \$45 million for “safe havens for youth and families”, to re-open and revitalize schools,

playgrounds, libraries, and other community safe spaces.

- \$10 million for “employment and careers”, for use to create low-barrier job opportunities for people at risk. This included guaranteed employment for youth in the most impacted neighborhoods.
- \$10 million for “community empowerment”, which invests in community-led interventions and restorative justice.

Our efforts resulted in the final FY 22 budget including \$155 million to combat gun violence, but much of this was not dedicated towards the trauma-informed, community-oriented measures. About \$68 million went to the aforementioned initiatives, which we considered a win. This created a baseline for anti-violence funding that carried through to the FY23 budget as well.

4) #JustServicesPHL: My #JustServicesPHL FY23 budget campaign earned \$30 million over the Mayor’s initial proposed budget for city services including traffic calming, clamping down on illegal dumping, cleaning up vacant lots, fixing broken street lights, and more, and further called for these investments to be made first and foremost in areas disproportionately impacted by gun violence. Research has shown that the targeting of interventions like cleaning, greening, and blight remediation, if targeted appropriately can decrease gun violence by up to 30% in affected areas. In this way, investment in basic city services equals investment in our residents’ safety and wellbeing.

2. How do we orient the police to service instead of enforcement?

To some degree, I think police will always be more geared towards enforcement, as that is their primary function. I do, however, think that their job requirements should include more intentional relationship building with community members in a way that creates more familiarity and empathy. That alone would orient officers more towards service.

Overall, though, I think that we should be aiming to create a separate class of community workers/ambassadors to handle service as opposed to expecting law enforcement officers to fundamentally change their orientation. There are a range of activities that PPD is expected to handle that would be more well-placed with civilians, including parking enforcement, mediation among community members, interfacing with citizens experiencing mental health difficulties, interfacing with homeless individuals, and more. I believe that we should relieve officers of these duties entirely, so that they can focus on the issues that most need police intervention such as violence.

3. What ideas do you have for reintegrating formerly incarcerated citizens?

I feel like we have to do much more to reintegrate formerly incarcerated individuals to our communities, including providing more assistance to obtaining housing, more assistance in making meaningful income, and access to medical and mental health resources. This would also help to reduce violence as a significant portion of shooting victims in Philadelphia are people on probation.

4. How do we keep employers from denying jobs to qualified ex-offenders?

We must enforce against this type of discrimination; Ban the Box is the law and must be adhered to. However, I don’t think the problem is solely with discrimination, as hiring incentives have also been

enacted. We need to step up enforcement, but we also make sure we are providing better support mechanisms for formerly incarcerated citizens to be job ready and maintain employment.

D. Environmental Justice

1. Would you support construction of an environmentally damaging facility such as a trash to steam plant in your district if it would bring hundreds of jobs?

No.

2. What will you do to support and promote the use of solar and other renewable energy sources in your District?

I will support more initiatives that can lower the cost of solar and other renewable energy sources like Solarize Philly. Additionally, I will push the City to lead the way and model good behavior through the retrofit of its own buildings.

E. Economic Development

1. What do you think of imposing an impact fee on businesses failing to pay workers \$15/hr to reimburse the City for the costs of relieving poverty?

I am interested, and would be willing to discuss this further.

2. Would you fund the Philadelphia Public Financing Authority that was created by Council to lay the groundwork for a City Public Bank?

Yes, definitely.

3. What do you think of legislation to bar or limit privatization of City property and assets, such as the PGW?

Fully support. I do not believe in the privatization of utilities.

4. The Board of the PIDC, the City's main economic development funding agency, is made up of members appointed by the Chamber of Commerce. Would you change that? How?

Yes, I do not believe the Chamber accurately represents our communities. I think there should be more community representation on PIDC's board, and am open to ideas on achieving that.

5. Would you require the City to withdraw subsidies from large corporations that fail to provide jobs or other benefits to City residents?

Yes.

F. Taxes

1. Which taxes would you propose raising to fund programs that cannot be paid for under the existing tax structure?

I supported and am a co-sponsor of CM Brooks's Wealth Tax legislation. I am also in favor of PILOTS for large, wealthy nonprofits.

2. What do you think of allowing a cap to be set on the number of property tax abatements granted in your District?

I would be very interested in that.

V. GENERAL STATEMENT

Use this space to provide any further information that you would like us to consider about your candidacy, not covered by the questions above.