

Sunrise NYC

2025 Primaries: Candidates 101



Overview

A one-stop shop/TLDR on candidates endorsed by Sunrise NYC in the upcoming [Mayoral](#), [City Council](#), and [Comptroller](#) races.

Reach out to hello@sunrisenyc.org if you have additional questions for us!

There are also some links to [additional resources](#) included at the end of the document.



Mayoral Race

Sunrise Movement NYC's recommendation is to rank Zohran Mamdani as #1 on your ballot, followed by Adrienne Adams, Brad Lander, Zellnor Myrie, and Michael Blake in the order of your preference.

Mayoral



Photo from the *New York Post*

Adrienne Adams



Adrienne Adams (no relation to Eric Adams) is currently Speaker of the New York City Council (representing District 28), where her work on climate action (Urban Forest Plan, City of Yes re-zoning) earned her commendation by New York League of Conservation Voters. While she doesn't have a specific platform for her mayoral run, her priorities include 7-day library service, vouchers for childcare, and expanding access to CUNY, among others. Her focus is more on progressive social policies than climate action: her boldest proposals include (1) guaranteed basic income for NYC's most vulnerable (e.g. youth aging out of the foster system, homeless pregnant women) that is an expansion of a pilot program she created last year and (2) continue building on her 'City for All' plan that tied increased funding for affordable housing programs (e.g. NYCHA repairs, senior and supportive housing) to 'City of Yes'.




Brad Lander

Brad Lander was first elected as a City Council Member for Park Slope in 2009 and currently serves as NYC Comptroller. Prior to being a Councilmember, he was the Director at the Pratt Center for Community Development where he worked to require affordable housing as a part of rezoning Williamsburg-Greenpoint. In the City Council, he sponsored legislation like the plastic bag ban, a living wage for uber/lyft drivers, and ending discriminatory credit checks for employment, and introduced participatory budgeting. In 2021 he was elected to be the City's Comptroller, endorsed by Sunrise NYC, where he has focused on highlighting




	<p>inequity in City contracts, fighting against Adams’ efforts to require City retirees to use private healthcare instead of Medicaid, and decarbonizing retirement pension funds. While in Council he founded the Progressive Caucus, has been a key advocate for housing unhoused people in unused hotels during COVID, and has previously called for defunding the police, although he has taken more moderate Democratic stances in his mayoral campaign.</p>
	<p>Zohran Mamdani</p> <p>Zohran Mamdani is a NYS Assembly Member for the 36th District (Astoria). He was first elected into the position in 2020 and reelected in 2022 and 2024, and was previously endorsed by Sunrise NYC. Prior to being an Assembly Member, he was a rapper, cricketer, and worked as a foreclosure prevention counselor. As an Assembly Member, he was the prime sponsor of the Clean Futures Act (A6761A), introduced the Not On Our Dime Act (A6943A/S06992A), organized New Yorkers against NRG’s proposed power plant in Astoria, supported the Build Public Renewables Act (A01466D), and pushed for a fare-free bus pilot, which was extremely successful with one free bus in each borough. In 2021, Mamdani went on a 15-day hunger strike in solidarity with NYC taxi drivers who were burdened with medallion debt. His platform includes climate-focused legislation such as renewable energy on public lands, Local Law 97 assistance for middle income homeowners, disaster preparedness, flood protection, and a multi-agency approach to tackle extreme heat.</p>
 <p>Photo from his Facebook page</p>	<p>Zellnor Myrie</p> <p>Born and raised in Brooklyn (Prospect Lefferts Gardens) to Costa Rican immigrant parents, Zellnor Myrie is currently the state senator for the 20th district i.e. central brooklyn including the neighborhoods of Crown Heights, East Flatbush, Park Slope, and Prospect Heights. As state senator, Zellnor Myrie has a strong record of championing progressive issues; he is a staunch supporter of tenant rights and has introduced and supported legislation related to climate change, gun safety, criminal justice, abortion rights, voting rights, and affordable housing. Read more</p>



	<p>here. The key issues of his mayoral platform include a plan to build one million homes in NYC over the next ten years, and free universal afterschool for all. He has received endorsements from several elected officials and orgs including WFP, DC37, and Jumaane Williams.</p>
 <p>Photo from his Facebook page</p>	<p>Michael Blake</p> <p>Born in the Bronx, Michael Blake is a former state assemblymember, White House aide to Obama, and VP of the Democratic National Convention. Michael Blake’s platform is built on the belief that we deserve better—better jobs, better housing, better schools, and safer communities. Endorsed by Riders Alliance, JFREJ, UAW, climate champions Emily Gallagher, Chi Osse, and Phara Souffrant Forest.</p>

Comptroller

 <p>Photo from his Facebook page</p>	<p>Justin Brannan</p> <p>A former punk musician turned Southern Brooklyn City Councilmember and Finance Chair, Justin Brannan is running for NYC Comptroller on a platform centered around climate resilience, social equity, and fiscal accountability. Brannan has a strong climate record—he has championed legislation for EV infrastructure, solar power expansion, and green job creation. With endorsements from the Working Families Party and major city unions, Brannan will be a watchdog for working New Yorkers and a leader on climate and affordability.</p>
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City Council



Photo from the city council website

Alexa Avilés (#38, Incumbent)

Neighborhoods: Gowanus-Red Hook, Park Slope, South Slope, Sunset Park (West), Sunset Park (Central), Green-Wood Cemetery, Dyker Heights, Bensonhurst, Bath Beach, Borough Park (West)

About the Candidate: Alivés has served two terms on the city council (since 2022), and has worked in the not-for-profit and social justice philanthropic sectors, including as Program Director at the Scherman Foundation. Climate resiliency is a key component of Alivés' platform. While in office Alivés has focused on environmental issues facing her constituents, including reducing air pollution from last mile truck traffic (a big concern in her district), green workforce development opportunities, and transitioning from fossil fuels to renewable energy. Her past work includes funding affordable housing, preventing idling of cars outside parks, and expanding language interpretation services. Her platform includes addressing Urban Heat Islands (e.g. Cool Streets), funding for NYCHA and public housing repairs, and expanding tax credits to working families, among other progressive policies. She was previously endorsed by Sunrise NYC.



Photo from the city council website

Tiffany Cabán (#22, Incumbent) – JENNA

Neighborhoods: Astoria, Woodside (North), Queensbridge-Ravenswood-Dutch Kills, Rikers Island, St. Michael's Cemetery, Astoria Park, Jackson Heights, East Elmhurst, LaGuardia Airport

About the Candidate: Tiffany Cabán is a Queens-born former public defender, with a Juris Doctorate from New York Law School, who has been on the City Council since 2021, and was previously endorsed by Sunrise NYC as a climate champion. She has introduced legislation in support of public safety reforms as





	<p>well as issues such as gender-based violence and abortion care. Cabán is a Green New Deal champion, supporting plans such as Renewable Rikers, which is in her district. She is a co-chair of the council's LGBTQIA Caucus. She also ran for Queens DA in 2019.</p>
 <p>Photo from her website</p>	<p>Bianca Cunningham (#41, Insurgent) - MICHAEL</p> <p><u>Neighborhoods:</u> Bedford-Stuyvesant (East), Crown Heights (North), Lincoln Terrace Park, Crown Heights (South), Prospect Lefferts Gardens-Wingate, Ocean Hill, Brownsville, East Flatbush-Rugby, East Flatbush-Remsen Village</p> <p><u>About the Candidate:</u></p> <p>Bianca Cunningham is a union leader and organizer who has fought for better wages, worker protections, affordable housing, and quality public education. She is running on a platform of healthy communities, housing as a human right, and seniors' right to dignity among others. She advocates for universal child care, public funded hospitals, mobile crisis units instead of police, foreclosure prevention programs, expanded union protections, and community schools.</p>
 <p>Photo from the city council website</p>	<p>Jennifer Gutierrez (# 34, Incumbent) – MICHAEL</p> <p><u>Neighborhoods:</u> Williamsburg, South Williamsburg, East Williamsburg, Bushwick (West), Bushwick (East), Ridgewood</p> <p><u>About the Candidate:</u></p> <p>Jennifer has worked as an organizer and activist in the district, working alongside immigrants and working families to champion affordable housing and increase access to social services. In the City Council, Jen has been a strong progressive voice, standing up to the Mayor's proposed budget cuts to education and social services and fighting to pass legislation that would benefit working parents, including the Marshall Plan for Moms and legislation that increased free access to doulas.</p>



Photo from the city council website

Shahana Hanif (#39, Incumbent)

Neighborhoods: Kensington, Borough Park, Windsor Terrace, Park Slope, Gowanus, Carroll Gardens, Cobble Hill, Boerum Hill, and the Columbia Waterfront

About the Candidate: Shahana Hanif, the first Bangladeshi and Muslim woman elected to the NYC Council, is known for her bold, progressive leadership and her anti-racist, feminist, and community-rooted activism. As co-chair of the Progressive Caucus and former chair of the Immigration Committee, she has championed climate justice, labor rights, and immigrant protections. Hanif has one of the strongest climate voting records in City Council, having spearheaded climate resiliency projects, universal composting, and climate-focused participatory budgeting. She authored NYC's Workers' Bill of Rights, helped pass landmark abortion protections, and created Promise NYC to support undocumented families. Her platform includes expanding green spaces and storm surge infrastructure, and preserving affordable housing at Columbia Waterfront District. A vocal advocate for Palestinian rights and a permanent Gaza ceasefire, she now faces a heated challenge from a pro-Israel opponent.



Photo from the city council website



Sandy Nurse (#37, Incumbent) – TANVI

Neighborhoods: Bushwick (West), Bushwick (East), The Evergreens Cemetery, Cypress Hills, East New York (North), East New York-City Line, Highland Park-Cypress Hills Cemeteries (South), Ocean Hill, Brownsville


About the Candidate:

Prior to being a council member Sandy worked as a community organizer, a carpenter, and a mentor to many youth in our community. Sandy was the founder of BK ROT, an environmental youth jobs program, and a co-founder of the Mayday Space, a home for social [movements](#). On the council Sandy is chair of the Criminal Justice committee and has worked to tackle a myriad of



	<p>issues. She passed legislation mandating an expansion to citywide public bathrooms, the rent transparency act which mandates landlords to notify tenants that live in rent stabilized residents about their legal rent, and the installation of solar power on city owned properties among more.</p>
 <p>Photo from his website</p>	<p>Edafe Okporo (#7, Insurgent) – JAMIE</p> <p><u>Neighborhoods:</u> Upper West Side (Central), Upper West Side-Manhattan Valley, Morningside Heights, Manhattanville-West Harlem, Hamilton Heights-Sugar Hill, Washington Heights (South), Upper West Side-Manhattan Valley</p> <p><u>About the Candidate:</u> Edafe Okporo, an asylum seeker from Nigeria and founder of a refugee nonprofit, is challenging incumbent Shaun Abreu in NYC Council District 7 with a platform focused on affordable housing, immigrant rights, and social services. Okporo calls for expanded social housing, a \$1.5 billion NYCHA capital boost, stronger tenant protections, and increased investments in green infrastructure like cooling centers. He advocates for co-responder mental health crisis teams, better care for city retirees, legal support for immigrants, and faster permitting for street vendors. In addition, Okporo criticizes Columbia University’s underwhelming community investment and boasts that unlike his opponent, he refuses to take money from luxury real estate developers.</p>
 <p>Photo from the city council website</p>	<p>Chi Ossé (#36, Incumbent)</p> <p><u>Neighborhoods:</u> Bedford-Stuyvesant (West), Bedford-Stuyvesant (East), Crown Heights (North)</p> <p><u>About the Candidate:</u> Chi Osse, previously endorsed by Sunrise NYC, was elected to city council in 2021 as the council’s only Gen Z member at age 23. Osse gained recognition as a public advocate in 2020, when he vouched for police reform at a BLM rally. His primary focuses as a legislator</p>



	<p>are tenants' rights and imagining innovative and community-centered public safety solutions. Last fall, Osse passed the FARE (Fairness in Apartment Rental Expenses) Act, which eliminated broker fees. In his first term, he spearheaded an effort to provide anti-overdose medications to bars and clubs. Although climate isn't the center of Osse's platform, he's outspoken in his support of pro-climate initiatives. For example, Osse joined a group of local park advocates in late April, calling for the restoration of funding to New York City's parks department and the restoration of 800 parks-related jobs. Osse is co-chair of the Brooklyn Delegation and a Brooklyn native.</p>
 <p>Photo from the city council website</p>	<p>Lincoln Restler (#33, Incumbent) – JENNA</p> <p><u>Neighborhoods:</u> Greenpoint, Northside Williamsburg, South Williamsburg, Brooklyn Heights, Downtown Brooklyn, DUMBO, Boerum Hill, Vinegar Hill, Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn Navy Yard</p> <p><u>About the Candidate:</u> Brooklyn-born Lincoln Restler has been a member of City Council since 2021, previously endorsed by Sunrise NYC, and is a member of the Progressive Caucus and the Chair of the Committee on Governmental Operations. Safe streets are one of his major priorities, in addition to affordable housing, climate mitigation, and transparency & accountability in the Democratic Party - he helped found the reformer New Kings Democrats. Prior to his time on the council, he worked in the Bloomberg and de Blasio administrations, implementing programs such as ID NYC.</p>

Additional Resources

- [02-23-25 Hub Meeting - Mayoral Candidate Summaries - Google Slides](#)
- Endorsements 101: [Sunrise NYC 2025 Endorsement 101](#)
- City council: [04-16-25 Political Ed Training](#)