

PRIMARY ELECTION

Tuesday, May 16, 2023

PROJECT HOME VOTERS GUIDE

What Will Philadelphia's Next Mayor Do to End and Prevent Homelessness?



A Non-Partisan Voters Guide for Housing and Homelessness Solutions in Philadelphia

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Primary Election: Tuesday May 16, 2023; Polls are open from 7am-8pm; Mail-in-Ballots due by 8pm



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The mission of the Project HOME community is to empower adults, children, and families to break the cycle of homelessness and poverty, to alleviate the underlying causes of poverty, and to enable all of us to attain our fullest potential as individuals and as members of the broader society. • Since 1999, Project HOME has registered more than 18,000 homeless and low-income voters, hosted hundreds of voter education events, and turned-out countless people to the polls.

NONE OF US ARE HOME UNTIL ALL OF US ARE HOME® • 1515 FAIRMOUNT AVE, PHILADELPHIA, PA 19130 • 215-232-7272 • **PROJECTHOME.ORG**

See a Philadelphian experiencing homelessness who needs help? Call the 24-Hour Homeless Outreach Hotline at 215-232-1984

What Primary Elections are happening on May 16, 2023?

Local: Philadelphia

- ▶ **Mayor** (Candidates' Plans to End and Prevent Homelessness start on page 3!)
- ▶ City Council
- ▶ Register of Wills
- ▶ Sheriff
- ▶ City Commissioners
- ▶ Court of Common Pleas
- ▶ Municipal Courts

State: Pennsylvania

- ▶ Justice of the Supreme Court
- ▶ Judge of the Superior Court
- ▶ Judge of the Commonwealth Court

BALLOT QUESTIONS

> See page 6

What do we want the next mayor to do?

1. Philadelphia needs more **affordable housing units with appropriate supports** to end homelessness and to prioritize City funding opportunities for permanent, supportive housing for vulnerable populations.
2. Expand **accessible housing** (including shelters and safe havens), **social services** and **comprehensive behavioral health supports** for people on the street to accommodate for people with disabilities as required by law. Meet the needs of people who want to come in including women, children, and families, and people who are aging and/or medically frail, particularly during dangerous weather and public health emergencies.
3. **Permanent housing with a recovery focus** needs to be prioritized for people who want to be in a recovery community within the Continuum of Care process, supported with additional flexible resources from the City, through the Office of Homeless Services (OHS), Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services (DBHIDS), and Community Behavioral Health (CBH).
4. Provide **long-term housing, education, and employment supports for young people** exiting foster care, and/or identifying as LGBTQIA+ who are homeless.
5. **Social services solutions** should be used to solve social problems, not police.

For more information, read the *Project HOME Mayoral Policy Brief* at projecthome.org/publications

IMPORTANT DATES

For the 2023 elections

- 5/1** Last day to register to vote before Primary Election: projecthome.org/register
- 5/9** Last day to apply for mail-in/absentee before Primary Election vote.pa.gov/applymailballot
- 5/16** Primary Election Day polls are open from 7am-8pm; Mail-in ballots due to Board of Elections by 8pm
- 10/23** Last day to register to vote before General Election
- 10/31** Last day to apply for mail-in/absentee before General Election
- 11/7** General Election Day polls are open from 7am-8pm; Mail-in ballots due to Board of Elections by 8pm

REGISTER TO VOTE AT [PROJECTHOME.ORG/VOTE](https://projecthome.org/vote)

Check voter registration status and apply for mail-in ballot/absentee at VOTE.PA.GOV



If you are experiencing issues on Election Day, call the National Election Protection Hotline at 1-866-OUR VOTE or 1-866-687-8683

GET TO KNOW THE CANDIDATES!



As Mayor, what is your plan to end and prevent homelessness in Philadelphia?

Project HOME asked Philadelphia's mayoral candidates to provide a 250-word response to the question above. Their responses on the following pages have not been edited beyond being limited to the requested 250-word limit. Responses are listed alphabetically by candidate surname.

AMEN BROWN



Democrat

amenforphilly.com

Brown has served in Pennsylvania's House of Representatives since 2021. Before that he founded and ran childcare centers and then a community center in Overbrook.

In order to address homelessness, it is going to take a coordinated approach that involves community input and collaboration in order to determine how to best use resources and provide services and support. My team will analyze programming and policy efforts from other cities to determine approaches that can be adopted and adjusted as needed to fit Philadelphia, ensuring that there will be metrics to track progress and for accountability.

The Amen Brown administration will:

- ▶ Establish and maintain relationships with public, private and nonprofit/community groups for integrated collaboration.
- ▶ Evaluate systems and processes to reduce barriers to development, e.g., supporting efforts to reform zoning, implementing one-stop permit shops and developing City-owned properties for affordable housing.
- ▶ Grow efforts to provide supportive housing to ensure that systemic issues are addressed as well in order to build skills that allow for individual sustainment, with an emphasis on vulnerable populations.
- ▶ Continue the investment in the rapid rehousing program, identifying ways for expansion.
- ▶ Ensure that programming offers accessible job pathways, as well as appropriate training, to increase income and achieve financial stability.
- ▶ Work with the needed departments and players to reduce wait time for housing placement.

As the city grows, it is inevitable for development to take place, but we have to make sure communities are not displaced in the process.

JEFF BROWN



Democrat

jeffbrowformayor.com

Brown is the founder and CEO of Brown's Super Stores, Inc., which runs 12 supermarkets.

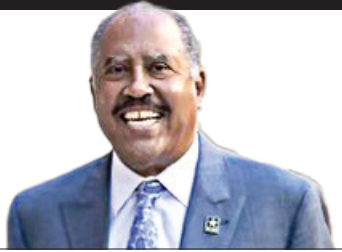
I saw this firsthand as a PA Convention Center Authority board member. Around 80 homeless people were living in the tunnels of the Convention Center, and we were spending over a million dollars a year to clean up after them. To me, this seemed like an antiquated and inhuman way of dealing with the problem. Looking for a solution, the authority worked with a team of social workers who met with the people living in the tunnels to understand their needs and get them into temporary housing. Our efforts were successful, and after several months we got everyone into temporary housing and later treatment at the cost of around \$500,000.

One of the things I learned during this time was that temporary housing for the homeless is no longer divided between violent and nonviolent people as it was in the past. This has left nonviolent homeless people resistant to living in temporary housing because they often find living on the street safer. As mayor, I will reinstate the differentiation between violent and nonviolent housing so more people find temporary housing viable. My administration will also use social workers, rather than police officers, to get homeless people off the streets and meet their needs.

For homeless people dealing with addiction, as with all people dealing with addiction, we need to change our perspective and approach. We must view addiction as a disease and a mental health issue, increasing access to drug courts and treatment.

Q: As Mayor, what is your plan to end and prevent homelessness in Philadelphia?

JAMES DELEON



Democrat

deleonformayor.info

DeLeon served as a municipal court judge for 34 years before resigning to run for mayor. He worked as an attorney before becoming a judge.

As mayor, my plan to end and prevent homelessness would consist of the following guidelines:

- a. Creating and preserving dedicated, affordable housing units.
- b. Promoting affordability by aligning supply with the market and neighborhood housing conditions.
- c. Helping households gain access to affordable private-market houses.
- d. Protecting against displacement and poor housing conditions.
- e. Creating and funding public accessibility to resources, such as mental health and drug counseling, job training, employment opportunities, financial management and education and permanent housing.

The above-referenced policies would be used in combination with the Shared Public Space Program; said program would be the coordinating vehicle for implementation of these objectives.

I intend to achieve the goal of eradicating homelessness in Philadelphia understanding that homelessness is a temporary state for most people who are given access to necessary societal and physical resources, such as mental health and drug counseling, job training, employment opportunities, financial education and permanent shelter. My administration will ensure that these resources are established and accessible for anyone experiencing homelessness with the goal to make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring in Philadelphia.

ALLAN DOMB



Democrat

votedomb.com

Domb was an at-large City Council member from 2016 to 2022, when he resigned to run for mayor. He owns a real estate firm and is known as the "Condo King."

As someone whose family was evicted when I was a child, I know what housing insecurity feels like and the deep impact it has on a family. I believe housing is a basic right, and the number of people living unhoused or in overcrowded housing in Philadelphia is a multilevel policy failure.

My administration will work with the federal and state leaders, the Philadelphia Housing Authority, community leaders, advocates and the private sector to expand the amount of affordable, safe housing available and provide wraparound services to those who need it.

For anyone unable to care for or otherwise provide for themselves, regardless of the reason, we have an absolute moral obligation to help them. As mayor, I will dramatically expand the number of housing units available to the people in the most need.

I will also move to help those who are temporarily in need, whether due to job loss, mental health, or addiction, so they do not end up in a cycle of being unhoused, with all the damage and lingering impact that has. As mayor, I will increase the number of housing units available on a short to immediate term.

Finally, because housing becomes more affordable when people make more money, I will work to increase the number of people working at good jobs. Our goal should be to increase homeownership, as it is one of the best ways to create generational wealth and protect against the threat of becoming unhoused.

DEREK GREEN



Democrat

derekformayor.com

Having served as an at-large City Council member since 2016, Green resigned to run for mayor in 2022. He previously served as an attorney, including as special counsel for Councilmember Marian Tasco.

Philadelphia has a housing crisis. From 2000 to 2012, Philadelphia suffered the second largest drop in homeownership rates among the nation's 30 largest cities. During my time as a deputy city solicitor representing the City's Office of Housing and Community Development, I saw this drop firsthand. Predatory lending was ravaging our communities, causing significant foreclosures in our neighborhoods, robbing citizens of the equity in their homes and increasing poverty in our city.

As mayor, I will address homelessness through immediate action and long-term preventative solutions. In the short term, we must support our neighbors experiencing homelessness. This means convening with all stakeholders in City government and relevant nonprofits to assess and deliver funding and other resources.

In the long term, I will implement preventative measures to support our homeless neighbors. That starts with keeping families in their homes. I co-authored the Philadelphia Anti-Predatory Lending Ordinance, which led to City Council's creation of the Residential Mortgage Foreclosure Diversion Program, which has saved more than 11,000 homes from foreclosure. I also passed legislation that amended the Home Rule Charter to annually allocate funding to the Housing Trust Fund. A city's budget conveys its priorities, and I made it clear that our City prioritizes safe and affordable housing for its residents.

Finally, homelessness is a symptom of deeper issues. Poverty is a problem that impacts various issues in our city. By increasing access to good-paying jobs, we will collectively lift up our communities and reduce the poverty that leads our neighbors into homelessness.



HELEN GYM

Democrat

helengym.com

Gym served as an at-large City Council member from 2016 until 2022, when she resigned to run for mayor. Gym is a former public school teacher who rose to prominence as a community organizer before running for City Council.

As mayor, I will implement a housing-first approach to curb homelessness and address the housing crisis. Research and lived experience shows that the best way to prevent homelessness is to guarantee access to affordable, long-term housing. Permanency is key. City government must take proactive steps to protect existing affordable housing and encourage the development of new affordable units to meet our current and future needs. To that end, I will push to expand the Housing Trust Fund, provide shallow rent subsidies, increase accessible no-barrier housing options, strengthen protections for renters and conduct greater outreach for government programs with an emphasis on youth and families.

My housing agenda will prioritize the needs of our most vulnerable residents: poor and working-class families, people struggling with substance use disorder, youth, seniors and the LGBTQ+ community. Advocating for renters and housing insecure residents has always been a priority of mine. During the pandemic, I created a nationally recognized eviction diversion program that kept thousands of Philadelphia families in their homes and slashed evictions by more than two-thirds. Additionally, I championed local rent subsidies in the City's housing plans for the first time ever, which are among the most cost-effective ways to expand affordable housing. I also successfully advocated for the first budget line item for addressing LGBTQ+ youth homelessness.

I am running on the belief that housing is a human right. I will take a bold approach to address our housing affordability crisis with urgency and work tirelessly to end homelessness throughout our city.



DAVID OH

Republican

davidoh.com

Oh served as at-large City Council member from 2012 to 2023, when he resigned to run for mayor. Oh worked as an attorney before running for City Council, and served in the Army National Guard from 1988 to 1992.

As a councilmember, I introduced a bill to provide the Housing Trust Fund that receives \$17 million a year with an additional \$50 million a year from the General Fund to jump start a serious and viable effort to build new, intelligent affordable housing. My bill was defeated. Therefore, I was not able to advance to the next step, which is to make changes to the Housing Trust Fund and focus on building affordable housing where needed, in low income neighborhoods. As Mayor, I would provide a plan to rehabilitate existing housing and build new housing in the communities where most needed.

Leveraging state/federal resources for development of affordable housing is a key strategy. Partnerships with landlords and developers on a local level are needed. Developers need to be accountable to provide affordable housing set-asides if they accept public money for market rate housing. The Department of Behavioral Health must prioritize the development of affordable housing. The Department needs to ensure there is adequate funding from the State for housing for individuals with serious mental illness and substance use issues.

Collaboration between Office of Homeless Services, Department of Behavioral and Community Behavioral Health must be expanded and prioritized relative to the need for permanent housing for those who want to be in a recovery community that it is supported with flexible resources. Department of Human Services needs to pledge additional resources to assist young adults exiting their care and custody to ensure they have stable housing and supportive services.



CHERELLE PARKER

Democrat

cherelleparker.com

Parker served as the 9th district City Council member from 2016 until 2022, when she resigned to run for mayor. From 2005 to 2015 she served as the state representative for the 200th district.

Homelessness in Philadelphia needs to be truly addressed as an issue of compassion, health, quality of life and public safety.

First and foremost, as mayor, I will lift up and ensure proper funding for organizations like Project HOME that are doing the yeoman's work of combatting homelessness in Philadelphia.

However, to truly end homelessness, we need to have a very real assessment of the current support systems that people living on the streets either temporarily or permanently pass through. Almost all of these people have passed through several public and nonprofit organizations tasked with providing a variety of outreach housing, treatment and wraparound services. But for some, this is just not enough.

We also need to improve our data and means of collection, as recent reports indicate we may be vastly undercounting the number of young adults, ages 18–24, who are experiencing bouts of homelessness. I will look to increase our investment and help modernize the Office of Homeless Services, which allocates funding for homeless outreach and services, in addition to providing services directly.

I will be proposing a comprehensive approach, leaning on my intergovernmental experience, to bring together local, state and regional resources to create a state-of-the-art in-patient facility to provide treatment that so many of these unhoused people need (whether it is mental and behavioral health, addiction treatment or a combination of these).

This will not be easy and will require skilled mental health professionals working around the clock to sweep our streets and respond to 911 calls, especially when someone is posing a threat to themselves or others.

Q: As Mayor, what is your plan to end and prevent homelessness in Philadelphia?

MARIA QUIÑONES SÁNCHEZ



Democrat

mariaforphilly.info

Quiñones Sánchez served as the 7th district City Council member from 2008 until 2022, when she resigned to run for mayor. She came to City Council after a career as a nonprofit leader and community activist.

In my administration, every City department will have a public safety plan, an anti-poverty plan and an economic opportunity and inclusion plan. Using zero-based budgeting we will invest millions in community infrastructure and affordable housing. We will end policies that destabilize families and criminalize poverty, and will realign Philadelphia's multi-billion dollar human services and welfare budgets. This work is complex, but there's nothing wrong with Philly that we can't fix together.

The backbone of our anti-poverty agenda will be "The Promise" — our public-private partnership with United Way created as a result of my work chairing City Council's Special Committee on Poverty Reduction and Prevention. With the funding I secured in 2020, The Promise has already helped thousands of Philadelphians access their benefits and receive assistance with expungement.

As mayor I will expand programs that keep people in their homes, including direct rental assistance, foreclosure and eviction prevention and income-based payment plans. As councilmember, I leveraged more public land for affordable housing than any other councilmember and created most of the tools in our affordable housing toolbox. As mayor I will scale up successful models for housing preservation and mixed-income development.

I understand more than any other candidate the complex intersection of homelessness, substance use and Philadelphia's ongoing public health and safety crisis. As mayor I will fully fund the Restore Kensington plan, remove barriers to treatment, support family reunification, pursue innovative models for recovery housing and make restorative investments to stabilize poor and working-class communities.

REBECCA RHYNHART



Democrat

rebeccaforphiladelphia.com

After leaving the financial industry in 2008, Rynhart served as city treasurer and budget director. She then served as city controller for four years, resigning in 2022 to run for City Council.

Every single one of us deserves the dignity of a roof over our heads. Homelessness is a serious issue throughout our city. To address this crisis, we need to both reach our residents who are unhoused where they are with outreach workers and increase access to supportive housing with wraparound services. I will lead this effort as mayor.

Increasing affordable housing in Philadelphia is key to solving homelessness. As mayor, I will create a citywide housing plan working with City Council so that there is affordable housing in every neighborhood. We have a unique opportunity to utilize the 8,500 City-owned vacant properties and lots to build affordable housing.

Additionally, we must help residents stay in their homes in areas where property taxes are increasing significantly because of development and gentrification. As mayor, I will deploy outreach workers to enroll homeowners in the Senior Tax Freeze and Long Term Owner Occupants Program (LOOP), two existing city programs that many residents are not aware of. We also must continue to support home repair programs and make sure people in our city are protected against unjust eviction.

Special thanks to Project HOME staff and Advocacy Committee, Grid Magazine, the Lenfest Institute for Journalism, the William Penn Foundation, and the many partners who made this guide possible.

All candidates who formally entered the mayoral race before 2/24/23 when we began our outreach to campaigns and responded to outreach by 3/10/23 have been included in this guide. The following candidates will also be on the 5/16/23 primary election ballot:

- ▶ Warren Bloom (Democrat): votebloom4mayor.org
- ▶ Delscia Gray (Democrat): [no campaign website or contact information](#)
- ▶ John Wood (Democrat): johnwoodformayor.com

BALLOT QUESTIONS

- 1 Should The Philadelphia Home Rule Charter be amended to create the Division of Workforce Solutions within the Department of Commerce and to define its duties?
- 2 Should The Philadelphia Home Rule Charter be amended to expand the requirements for annual minimum appropriations to the Budget Stabilization Reserve, more commonly known as the "rainy day fund"?
- 3 Should The Philadelphia Home Rule Charter be amended to make employees of the Citizens Police Oversight Commission exempt from civil service hiring requirements?
- 4 Should The Philadelphia Home Rule Charter be amended to create the Office of the Chief Public Safety Director and to define its powers, duties and responsibilities?

For more information, please visit seventy.org/philadelphiaprimary-voter-guide/ballot-questions

Instagram.com/[projecthomephl](#)
Facebook.com/[projecthome](#)
Youtube.com/[projecthomephilly](#)
Linkedin.com/company/[project-h.o.m.e.](#)



VOTE!

How To Vote In The 2023 Primary Election

ARE YOU REGISTERED TO VOTE AT YOUR CURRENT ADDRESS?

Register to Vote by Monday, May 1, to Vote on Tuesday, May 16, 2023

Polls are Open From 7am-8pm & Mail-in Ballots Are Due by 8pm

REGISTER TO VOTE:

- ▶ **Option 1:** Use your phone to scan the QR Code
- ▶ **Option 2:** Visit projecthome.org/vote



APPLY FOR A MAIL-IN BALLOT BY MAY 9 AT 5PM (PRIMARY)

- ▶ **Option 1:** Use your phone to scan the QR Code
- ▶ **Option 2:** Visit vote.pa.gov/applymailballot

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS AS A PENNSYLVANIA VOTER:

- ▶ All voters must be a US Citizen, be at least 18 years old on Election Day, and a resident of Pennsylvania for at least 30 days before the election.
- ▶ You can vote when you are homeless; just use the address of a place where you get mail.
- ▶ You can vote when released from jail or prison – even with a felony conviction from PA or another state.
- ▶ You can vote when you are on probation, parole, or house arrest.
- ▶ You can vote while in jail awaiting trial or while serving time for a misdemeanor.

MAKE A PLAN TO VOTE!

- ▶ Where do I vote?
 - Confirm Polling Site Before You Vote Online at vote.pa.gov/ status or call the Election Protection Hotline at 1-866-OUR VOTE or 1-866-687-8683
 - Check mail-in ballot status: vote.pa.gov/mailballotstatus
 - Deliver by 8pm on Election Day: In Philadelphia, you can bring your mail-in ballot to City Hall or 520 N. Columbus Blvd.
 - What if your mail-in ballot did not come in time
 - Anyone who requested a mail-in ballot can vote in person on a provisional (paper) ballot. You won't be allowed to vote on the voting machines, but you can vote by paper ballot and it will be counted later

DO I NEED VOTER ID?

- ▶ Voters only need ID if it is their first time voting at a new polling site.
- ▶ Acceptable forms of ID include photo and non-photo state or government ID, voter registration card, firearm permit, current utility bill, current bank statement, current paycheck, and government check.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

If you are experiencing issues voting, call the Election Protection Hotline at 1-866-OUR VOTE or 1-866-687-8683.

projecthome.org/vote and vote.pa.gov

VOTE!

How To Vote In The 2023 General Election

ARE YOU REGISTERED TO VOTE AT YOUR CURRENT ADDRESS?

Register to Vote by Monday, October 23, 2023 to Vote on Tuesday, November 7, 2023

Polls are Open From 7am-8pm & Mail-in Ballots Are Due by 8pm

REGISTER TO VOTE:

- ▶ **Option 1:** Use your phone to scan the QR Code
- ▶ **Option 2:** Visit projecthome.org/vote



APPLY FOR A MAIL-IN BALLOT BY OCT. 31 AT 5PM (GENERAL)

- ▶ **Option 1:** Use your phone to scan the QR Code
- ▶ **Option 2:** Visit vote.pa.gov/applymailballot

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS AS A PENNSYLVANIA VOTER:

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